

# The 12th-14th Centuries in Georgia

## *The Life of Tamar, the Queen of Queens and The Hundred Years' Chronicle*

### *from Kartlis Tskhovreba [A History of Georgia]*

(Tbilisi, 2014), pp. 287-395,

Translated from Classical Georgian by Dmitri Gamq'relidze.

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[The Georgian Chronicles](#) [*Kartlis Tskhovreba*], at Wikipedia.  
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Attached to the present document are chronological tables and a multilingual HTML version of the translation, made by Robert Bedrosian in 2024.

Sources for the chronologies are:

Iberian/Georgian: C. Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History* (Georgetown, 1963), "Chronology of the Early Kings of Iberia," in *Traditio*, vol. 25 (1969), pp. 1-33; Toumanoff's tables in *The Cambridge Medieval History IV* (Cambridge, 1966).

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GEORGIAN NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

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COMMISSION FOR THE STUDY OF GEORGIAN HISTORICAL SOURCES

# KARTLIS TSKHOVREBA

A HISTORY OF GEORGIA

ARTANUJI Publishing  
Tbilisi 2014

The full volume is available at Internet Archive: [Kartlis Tskhovreba](https://www.archive.org/details/kartlis_tskhovreba)

**The Georgian Chronicles of**  
***KARTLIS TSKHOVREBA***  
**(A History of Georgia),**  
**translated and with commentary**

Leont'i Mroveli, The Lives of the Georgian Kings	<b><i>Dmitri Gamq'relidze</i></b>
Juansher Juansheriani, The Life of Vakht'ang Gorgasali	<b><i>Dmitri Gamq'relidze</i></b>
The Martyrdom of Saint Archil	<b><i>Medea Abashidze</i></b>
Mat'iane Kartlisa (The Chronicle of Kartli)	<b><i>Arrian Chant'uria</i></b>
The Life of David, King of Kings	<b><i>Dmitri Gamq'relidze</i></b>
The Chronicle of Giorgi Lasha and His Time	<b><i>Medea Abashidze</i></b>
The Life and Tale of the Bagrat'ionis	<b><i>Medea Abashidze</i></b>
The History and Eulogy of Monarchs	<b><i>Dmitri Gamq'relidze</i></b>
Basili, The Life of Tamar, the Great Queen of Queens	<b><i>Dmitri Gamq'relidze</i></b>
The Hundred Years' Chronicle	<b><i>Dmitri Gamq'relidze</i></b>

The maps are from D. Muskhelishvili (ed.) Historical Atlas of Georgia (forthcoming).

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საქართველოს მეცნიერებათა ეროვნული აკადემია

საქართველოს ისტორიის წყაროების კომისია

# ქართლის ცხოვრება

ინგლისური ტექსტის რედაქტორი

სტივენ ჯონსი

ქართული და რუსული ტექსტების მთავარი რედაქტორი

როინ მეტრეველი

გამომცემლობა არტანუჯი

თბილისი 2014

## FOREWORD

The history of Georgia and Georgians occupies a significant place in world history. Human society has experienced a long cultural and historic evolution on the territory of Georgia. Historical investigation, from archaeological discoveries to ethnographic analysis, show convincingly that Georgia was an ancient country where land farming and animal breeding was comparable to any place in the more advanced and civilized world at the time. In Georgia, ploughing implements have been used since earliest times, the principle of the wheel was long known, and the vine, which requires sophisticated care and irrigation, was cultivated. The first state on the territory of Georgia appeared three thousand years ago, and over the millennia, Georgians have created an original and highly developed culture.

A civilization represents a cultural unity of high order. It is determined by common characteristics, such as language, religion, common traditions, as well as self-identification by a people, or collection of peoples.

History is unpredictable, but the historian who grasps the depth of history becomes a participant in its creative process. Our task is to offer to the English-speaking reader the most important narrative of the history of Georgia – *kartlis tskhovreba* (*The History of Georgia*). It is a major monument in itself and a source of much of our known history. Georgian civilization, like others, occupies a particular historical niche which is reflected in the writings of *kartlis tskhovreba*.

Georgian history is characterized by multiple wars, which put an utmost strain on the country's physical and moral forces. At the same time, the country enjoyed significant success, such as the political and territorial unification of the country (but only at certain crucial periods), the development of cities and urban life, as well as of a high level of science, education and culture in general. The life of our Georgian ancestors, their struggle, labor, and creativity have found reflection in folklore, including poetry, oral stories, and written legends. The story of Amirani, the myth of the Argonauts, and tales about the foundation of Tbilisi, have passed from one generation to another. Monuments of material culture, such as churches, monasteries, castles, palace ruins, and large settlements, are the evidence that tells us about our own past. A complete reconstruction of the country's history is possible mainly through written sources.

The first manuscript of a historical character in the Georgian language is dated from the fifth century A.D. The collection of historical works known as *kartlis tskhovreba* represents the only coherent written source of the history of Georgia. It embodies the "official" history of the country. It is a brilliant monument of Georgian historical writing. Since ancient times, the Bible, the *Knight in*

*the Panther's Skin*, and *kartlis tskhovreba*, were considered to be the "fair" and "holy" books which together formed a necessary part of the dowry of a Georgian bride.

In *kartlis tskhovreba*, the historical works of different authors are set in chronological order, which together create a unified history of Georgia. This literary monument is remarkable because besides representing a history of Georgia and the Georgians, it contains much information regarding the history of different countries and peoples (Azerbaijanis, Armenians, Greeks, Romans, Persians, Arabs, Byzantines, Turks, Mongols and many others).

A great contribution to the study of *kartlis tskhovreba* was made by the King of Kartli, Vakht'ang VI (1675-1737), who created a special commission of "learned men" to compile and edit the texts of this literary work. The manuscripts of *kartlis tskhovreba* were copied many times (mainly based on the MS of Vakht'ang's edition), but now we have about twenty such manuscripts. In 1849 the Russian Academy of Sciences published *kartlis tskhovreba*, based on the MS of the post-Vakht'ang period, edited by the French orientalist and Georgian Academician Marie-Félicité Brosset. Brosset translated the text into French and published it. He made this source on the history of Georgia accessible to the world community.

Brosset used three manuscripts of the eighteenth century, which had been reedited and supplemented by the commission of "learned men" under Vakht'ang VI. A new MS of the eighteenth century was later found. Five manuscripts were also discovered going back to the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, i.e. to the pre-Vakht'ang period.

In 1884 the eminent Georgian historian Dimit'ri Bakradze, uncovered a copy of the MS assigned for Queen Mariam, wife of King Rost'om of Kartli, (1633-1648), dated from the seventeenth century. The manuscript is preserved in the National Centre of Manuscripts (S-30). In 1906, the MS was published by Ekvtime Taq'aishvili. The Queen Mariam MS contained the *Fount of Treasure*, which J. P. Mahe and Ts. Kurtsikidze assume was translated from Arabic; *The Lives of Georgian Kings* by Leont'i Mroveli; *The Life of Vakht'ang Gorgasali* by Juansher; *The Chronicle of Kartli*; *The Life of David, King of Kings*; *The Life and Tale of the Bagrat'ionis* by Sumbat Davidisdze; a manuscript of the first historian of Queen Tamar, *The History and Eulogy of the Monarchs*; and the work of an unknown chronicler entitled *The Hundred Years' Chronicle*.

In 1913, Ivane Javakhishvili discovered an MS of *kartlis tskhovreba* in the house of A. Jambak'ur-Orbeliani, in Lamisq'ana village. According to the colophon of the copyist, the MS was assigned for Anna, wife of Aleksandre, the King of K'akheti (1476-1511), but in fact it was a later copy (sixteenth century) of the MS. The manuscript published in 1942 by S. Q'aukhchishvili is preserved in the National Center of Manuscripts (Q-795).

The MS of Queen Anna contains the writings of Leont'i Mroveli and Juansher, *The Chronicle of Kartli*, *The History of David the Restorer (The Life of David, King of Kings)* and *The Chronicle of Giorgi Lasha and His Time*. In 1923, Ivane Javakhishvili discovered one more manuscript, the so-called Ch'alashvili MS. There are two parts to it: the earlier one was rewritten at the beginning of the seventeenth century; the missing parts (at the beginning and at the end) were written in 1731 by Eraj Ch'alashvili, who supplemented the text according to the MS of Vakht'ang's edition. Now the manuscript is preserved in the National Center of Manuscripts (Q-207).

The following manuscripts are included in the MS of Eraj Ch'alashvili: the manuscripts of Leont'i Mroveli and Juansher, *The Chronicle of Kartli*, *The History of David the Restorer*, and the second history of Queen Tamar (different from the *History and Eulogy of the Monarchs*). I. Javakhishvili considered Basili Ezosmodzghvari (Lord and Steward of the King's Court) to be the author of the second history of Tamar; the story was called *The Life of Tamar, the Great Queen of Queens*. At the end of the manuscript, the new part, or the continuation of *kartlis tskhovreba* is included (fourteenth-eighteenth centuries) composed by the "learned men" under Vakht'ang VI.

In 1942, S. Q'aukhchishvili studied the Machabeli MS, copied by Giorgi Machabeli in 1736. The original was an MS of *kartlis tskhovreba*, which belonged to King Archil, as stated by the copyist. The missing parts of the original (at the beginning and at the end) were taken by Machabeli from Ch'alashvili's MS. Today the manuscript is preserved at the National Center of Manuscripts (H-2135).

The Machabeli MS includes an *Introduction* composed by the Commission of "learned men;" the initial part of *The Chronography of Pseudo-Dorotheus* (sixteenth-seventeenth centuries); *The Lives of Georgian Kings*, *The Conversion of Kartli by Saint Nino*, *The Life of Vakht'ang Gorgasali*, *The Martyrdom of Saint Archil*, *The Chronicle of Kartli*, *The History of David the Restorer*, *The History and Eulogy of the Monarchs*, and *The Hundred Years' Chronicle*. The MS ends with *kartlis tskhovreba* (fourteenth to eighteenth centuries).

In 1959 Ak'ak'i K'limiashvili discovered an MS of *kartlis tskhovreba* in the family of Olga Mach'avariani, in Upper Imereti (western Georgia). The MS was copied in 1697. The date was indicated in the epilogue of the copyist. He also mentioned the original of the copied MS. The manuscript is preserved in Svetitskhoveli Cathedral in Mtskheta. Conceivably, it is the same manuscript mentioned in the Mtskheta Charter in 1546. In the epilogue the name of the person, who ordered the manuscript – Nik'oloz Samebeli, Diocesan of Sameba (Trinity church near Ujarma village, K'akheti) is mentioned. The MS is preserved at the National Center of Manuscripts (Q-1219).

The MS discovered by K'limiashvili includes: *The Lives of the Georgian Kings*, *The Conversion of Kartli by Saint Nino*, *The Life of Vakht'ang Gorgasali*, *The Martyrdom of Saint Archil*, *The Chronicle of Kartli*, *The History of the Bagrat'ids*, *The Life of David, King of Kings*, *The History and Eulogy of Monarchs*, and *The Hundred Years' Chronicle*.

The above-mentioned manuscripts of *kartlis tskhovreba* contain the writings of an "ancient cycle." The Commission of "learned men," convened on the initiative of Vakht'ang VI, and based on different MS versions, edited and supplemented *kartlis tskhovreba*, and added a continuation, called the *New kartlis tskhovreba*. Besides this work, the writings of Vakhushti Bagrat'ioni (S. Q'aukhchishvili published this work in the fourth volume of *kartlis tskhovreba*), of Sekhnia Chkheidze, P'ap'una Orbeliani and Oman Kherkheulidze (together with the work of Vakhushti) were included in the "new cycle" and published by David Chubinashvili in St Petersburg, in 1854, as the second book of *kartlis tskhovreba*.

In its original form *kartlis tskhovreba* was composed in the eleventh-twelfth centuries. Evidently, political integration of the state, and its economic and cultural development, demanded an integrated and complete description of the past of Georgia. The collection aimed not only at describing the history of the state, but also supported ideologically the political integration of Georgia and the reign

of the Bagrat'ioni dynasty. Before that time, notes on the chronicles of Georgia were made "from time to time," as Leont'i Mroveli puts it in his work, *The Martyrdom of Saint Archil*.

Ivane Javakhishvili demonstrated that initially the chronicles contained the history of Georgia from ancient times up to the eighth century. Later, works on the history from the eighth to twelfth centuries, and then the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries, were added. This would include *The Lives of the Georgian Kings and Patriarchs of the Georgians*, *The Conversion of Kartli by Saint Nino*, written by Leont'i Mroveli, *The Life of Vakhtang Gorgasali* by Juansher, *The Hundred Years' Chronicle*, *The Martyrdom of Saint Archil*, by Leont'i Mroveli, *The Chronicle of Kartli*, *The Life of David, King of Kings*, *The Life and Tale of the Bagrat'ionis* by Sumbat Davidisdze, *The History of the Five Reigns* (Life of King Demet're, Life of King Giorgi, Life of Queen Tamar the Great, Life of King Giorgi, the son of Tamar), the work of the first historian of Queen Tamar, *The History and Eulogy of the Monarchs*, the work of Basili Ezosmodzghvari, *The Life of Tamar, the Great Queen of Queens*, and *The Hundred Years' Chronicle*. The last work ends with the accession of Giorgi Brts'q'invala ("The Brilliant") at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The chronicler describes the first steps of the King, but what happened later is not included; it is said that "the tongue is unable to tell such wonderful and awesome (things)," and with this the narrative ends. What these "wonderful and awesome (things)" were, remains a riddle. The so-called "ancient cycle" of *kartlis tskhovreba* ends with *The Hundred Years' Chronicle*.

Perhaps some of the manuscripts of *kartlis tskhovreba* have been lost, and there was no chance to continue the work. However, some notes about the events of that epoch exist. The new cycle of *kartlis tskhovreba*, as we have already noted, was created by "learned men" of Vakht'ang VI's Commission, who collected various historical materials and wrote a history of the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries. It took twenty years to compile the new *kartlis tskhovreba*. The MS of Vakht'ang VI's times provides evidence of the laborious work done by the "learned men." *Kartlis tskhovreba* attracted the attention of Georgian society at that time. New customers and copyists appeared. Vakhushti Bagrat'ioni pointed to the great number of manuscripts of *kartlis tskhovreba*.

The "learned men" used various sources for the creation of the *New kartlis tskhovreba*. They expressed regret over the fact that for certain periods, the history of Georgia was "not written". They had to borrow the material from "ancient books," from the history of Persians and Armenians, chronicles and charters, stories of eyewitnesses, all of which is noted in the introduction to the *New kartlis tskhovreba*. Vakht'ang VI and his commission made a significant contribution to the study, editing and supplementing *kartlis tskhovreba*.

In 1955-59 Academician S. Q'aukhchishvili, examining the critical notes concerning all the manuscripts of that time, published the complete text *kartlis tskhovreba*. This MS played a great role in the investigation of Georgian history, and was also considered a textological and source study. It combined the results of the colossal work performed by I. Javakhishvili and other Georgian scholars. Over the last fifty years *kartlis tskhovreba* has been at the center of scholarly attention and is considered the most important source on the history of Georgia. Many special studies have been published in Georgia and abroad. Some works included in the text before the second half of the twelfth century, have been translated into the Old Armenian language (in 1953 Ilia Abuladze published

a translation with commentaries); E. Taq'aishvili, V. Akhvlediani, G. Tsulaia, M. Lordkipanidze, K. K'ek'elidze, V. Dondua, and M. Shanidze translated some works into Russian; Marie Brosset translated parts into French, G. Patch – into German, and K. Vivian and R. Thomson, into English.

In 1959 the manuscript of the so-called “ancient cycle,” written in “nuskhuri” (an ancient Georgian alphabet) and dated 1697, was discovered. This, along with continuing scholarly interest in *kartlis tskhovreba*, led to the demand for a new publication of a critical text addressing this unique literary monument. The Commission for the study of Georgian historical sources of the Georgian Academy of Sciences started this work at the end of the last century. A group of historians and philologists of the K. K'ek'elidze Institute of Manuscripts, the I. Javakhishvili Institute of History and Ethnology, and Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, took part in a textological and critical investigation of the text of *kartlis tskhovreba*.

The manuscripts of *kartlis tskhovreba* selected for publication in different editions, are not identical and depend on the objectives of the publishers (as well as the availability of the materials). M. Brosset's publication and the monumental two-volume publication of S. Q'aukhchishvili (1955-1959) are based on several manuscripts well known at the time of publication. The editions of a separate MS by E. Taq'aishvili in 1906 (the MS of Queen Mariam) and S. Q'aukhchishvili in 1942 (the MS of Queen Anna) were designed to introduce earlier texts from the pre-Vakht'ang editions. The selection of the edited manuscripts for publication in *kartlis tskhovreba* are different (see I. Javakhishvili, K. K'ek'elidze, M. Lordkipanidze, M. Shanidze, Ts. Kurtsikidze, R. K'ik'nadze, G. Arakhamia). The manuscripts of the “ancient cycle” are taken as the basis for the present English publication (the manuscripts of Queen Mariam, of Queen Anna, of Ch'alashvili, of Machabeli, and the MS discovered by A. K'limiashvili). The peculiarities of each MS and the result of the editorial work of Vakht'ang VI, and of later times, have been taken into consideration for this publication.

Regarding the titles and authorship of the separate constituent parts of *kartlis tskhovreba*, we wholly share the opinion of I. Javakhishvili. The traditional principles regarding the content and structure of this literary monument, developed by I. Javakhishvili and others, and realized by S. Q'aukhchishvili, were followed in the present edition with some modifications. Thus, *The Lives of the Georgian Kings* by Leont'i Mroveli was considered to be the history of heathen kings, including the reign of Mirian and the story concerning the conversion of Kartli by Nino of Cappadocia. The life and feats of Vakht'ang Gorgasali was considered to be authored by Juansher, while the history of the period after Vakht'ang and up to the beginning of the story of King Archil (before the story of the raids of the Arabs) is regarded as pseudo-Juansherian; the story of the life and martyrdom of Archil is singled out as a separate piece (the author is Leont'i Mroveli).

The success of the presented “lives” depends as a rule on the orderly narration and interpretation of the chronicler. He may use different means to achieve the best effect; often he tries to render the event realistically, builds the plot interestingly, and uses the ideological subtext skillfully.

I. Javakhishvili estimated highly the works that make up *kartlis tskhovreba*, and thought that the most trustworthy among them were: *The Chronicle of Kartli*, the writings of the historian of David the Restorer, *The History and Eulogy of the Monarchs*, *The Life of Tamar, the Great Queen of Queens*, by Basili Ezosmodzghvari, works of the chronicles of the times of Lasha-Giorgi and Sumbat Davidisdze,

and *The Hundred Years' Chronicle* by an unknown chronicler. The scholar made critical notes on the works of Leont'i Mroveli and Junasher; he assumed that their publication with commentaries was necessary.

Among the authors of *kartlis tskhovreba*, the historian of David the Restorer, a highly enlightened person, a connoisseur of Western and Eastern cultures, is the most trustworthy and competent. He considered writing chronicles a proper occupation, and understood that for a responsible and valuable representation of the activity of some person, the author must master the art of rhetoric, that is the skill of an organized and trustworthy narration. At the same time, he believed the chronicler should not exaggerate or distort the events, and he rebuked Homer and Aristobulus, the first for glorifying the heroes of the Trojan War and the second for praising Alexander of Macedon. He thought that due to the lack of sufficient factual material, Homer and Aristobulus were obliged to fill in the narration by "rhetorical digressions."

The work of the historian of David the Restorer is distinguished for its elegance, style, language, artistry and deep sincerity. Comparison of the chronology of the events with other sources confirm the trustworthiness of his works. All this allows us to consider the chronicle to be a primary historical source. Without discussing in detail other manuscripts of *kartlis tskhovreba*, we will just note that all of them are valuable and must be considered vital to the study of the history of the Caucasus.

The main line of Georgian historical thinking developed along with the political development of Medieval Georgia. At the time of the political strengthening and cultural revival of Georgia, Georgian historiography revived and developed as an integral part of Georgian culture. The achievements of Georgian historical writing were to a considerable degree determined by traditionally highly developed philological (particularly hagiographical) and historical-philological schools. This is the context for *kartlis tskhovreba*.

We believe that the current publication of *kartlis tskhovreba* in English is particularly important. This unique historical monument should become available for the global public who speak and read English.

Academician **Roin Met'reveli**

## EDITOR'S NOTE

The transliteration system we used for Georgian is the Georgian national system, adopted in 2002 by the State Department of Geodesy and Cartography of Georgia and the Institute of Linguistics of the Georgian Academy of Sciences.\*

Georgian does not use capitals, a system we have generally followed, except for names and places, and when a Georgian word begins a sentence. There are spelling inconsistencies between the texts in Georgian, which span the ninth to fourteenth centuries; the texts have undergone many subsequent edits by Georgian chroniclers and scholars. We kept mostly to the original spelling but footnoted or added in parenthesis alternative spellings or names that might be more familiar to the reader. Thus Trabzon will be translated in parenthesis as Trebizond, Tpilisi as Tbilisi, Q'ivchaq's as Q'ipchaks, etc. Plurals we have rendered with an "s." Georgian authors in Russian translation will have no diacritic marks.

For Russian, we use the US Library of Congress transliteration system without the diacritic marks. At times, Russian spelling, such as *Abkhazia*, may be modified instead of Georgian equivalents (*Abkhazeti*), if they are considered more familiar (and thus more understandable) to the reader.

**Stephen Jones**

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\* (<http://www.transliteration.com/transliteration/en/georgian/national/>)

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**Basil Ezosmodzghvari**

## **THE LIFE OF TAMAR, THE QUEEN OF QUEENS**

Giorgi,<sup>1</sup> son of Demet're, who was the son of David, ascended to the throne in the year of 375 of *koronik'on*.<sup>2</sup> All the days of his life he spent in ease and reigned happily, increasing the favors for churches, monasteries and bishops. He had no children and that grieved him. At last, by the will of the Lord, an agreeable breeze blew and a daughter was born to the royal couple, a beautiful creature, devoid of any fault. The father gave her the name Tamar.

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Several years passed, and King Giorgi died. There was grief and immense sorrow everywhere, and his sister, Rusudan,<sup>3</sup> was especially prone to heartache. Rusudan was a former daughter-in-law of the Great Sultans of Shamiram,<sup>4</sup> and a Queen, the bearer of power of all the rulers of Khuarasan. After she became a widow, she was brought back to her motherland from the Sultan's domains and she ascended the throne as Queen of Georgia, in order to glorify her family as well as our whole kingdom. At that time Tamar with her sister, who was also called "Rusudan,"<sup>5</sup> lived at her aunt's. The narrative I am going to impart, affords me little opportunity to talk of Queen Rusudan, to relate how much beauty and excellence she displayed as compared with all the other queens that lived before her. However, I will dare to tell at least something; how, for instance, at eighty years of age she came to love celibacy<sup>6</sup> and holiness and virtue in full.

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But let us continue after this brief interruption. Grief seized the most worthy of Giorgi's relatives, but seeing Tamar before them, the nobles of the kingdom were unwilling to prolong their grief. They shook off their sorrow, blew the trumpets, as was done in the name of Solomon,<sup>7</sup> and placed her on the happy throne of Vakht'ang,<sup>8</sup> with the crown of David, which was prepared formerly for the Moon<sup>9</sup> by the King of Kings Sabaoth Elohim,<sup>10</sup> so as to possess the word from sea to sea and from the rivers to the end of the world.<sup>11</sup> The nobles brought a scepter, a cross of wood, and the banner of David, which had never experienced the force of opposing winds. And all the people in unanimous exclamation handed to Tamar the parental sword and the throne, presented to her by her father.

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Did her great mind accept all this bravely? Not at all, and it could not be otherwise. Did she not deserve them – the crown and the symbol of the kingdom? Did she not become a magnet for everyone who beheld her? In ancient times, it was said that "whoever was born blind – would leave this world blind," meaning anyone who had not been able to see Tamar. Her constitution was perfect, with dark eyes, a rosy tint to her white cheeks; her demeanor was modest, she had a way

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of regally and freely casting her eyes around her; then, there was her pleasant and cheerful speech, her shunning of any familiarity; her voice charmed the ear, and her conversation, was devoid of any vestige of immorality. God endowed Tamar with such virtues it would be not excessive to say that her image was from the very beginning destined to gloriously realize the words of David, who said that the kings and princes should worship him, and that the tribes should bring him gifts.

And so all lips praised God. Seeing the Queen, the bearer of the crown, the powerful and the priestly bowed before her and glorified her; she was worthy of the highest praise, which was accompanied by the blowing of horns. Those honored to see all this might have said that all the heavenly powers helped the inhabitants of the earth express their joy. But the most wonderful thing, in my opinion, was that not one valorous warrior who could match her appeared on any other throne at this time. And all (of them), trusting in her grace, full of joy, outstripped one another to thank God and praise the Queen, thankful for their happiness.

Tamar, by God's will, ascended to the throne in the summer of the year six thousand six hundred and eighty six<sup>12</sup> from the creation of the world, in the four hundred and third year of *Kronik'on*. She was the daughter of the King of Kings, Giorgi, son of Demet're, born of Giorgi's wife Burdukhan, daughter of the King of the Ossetians, the one, who, besides being Tamar's mother, exceeded all the other virtuous women in all respects. The country of Georgia and its King had seen no daughter-in-law like her; she was worthy of being honored by posterity and of the praise that passes from generation to generation.

What must be said of Tamar is her role as the Lord's deputy, who promoted the well-being of her kingdom and her people. Elevating her mind, but humble in her soul, she understood the heaviness of the task entrusted to her and, directing her eyes to her heavenly instructor, began to rule as the Holy Spirit inspired her. Observing everybody around her with joy and understanding, she discerned at once the sincere and the dishonest, the perfidious and pure, the faithful and the double-dealers. And judging wisely, she, as a first measure, showered favors generously upon everybody, so that her loyal followers would be grateful, while the others were obliged to keep silence for the sake of justice.

In terms of faith, she was like a second Constantine; like him, she was intent on doing godly things. She began to sharpen her double-edged sword to eliminate the sources of evil, and called a council in order to define and establish the order of all the great and General Councils.

At once, she called back Nik'olaoz Gulaberisdze<sup>13</sup> from the holy city of Jerusalem, who at one time had rejected the rank of Katholikos of Kartli, because of his modesty. When he arrived in Kartli she gathered all the clergy, the monks and hermits of her kingdom, and people well-versed in the law of God, in order to destroy the sources of evil that germinated in the soil of orthodoxy in her kingdom. And setting her kindly hopes upon God, she soon achieved victory in this too.

And the bishops of both kingdoms gathered; at the head stood Nik'olaoz, who so resembled his namesake; and Ant'oni Kutateli Saghirisdze, the archbishop of Kutaisi, widely glorified for his virtues, powerful in his words and deeds.

Tamar received them with great simplicity, as a human being and not at all as a Queen, like angels and not men; she gathered all of them in one room and seated them on thrones, herself

sitting separately at a little distance, not like a Queen, and she told them: “Oh, Holy Fathers, you are appointed by God as our teachers and the rulers of the Holy Church; you have to preach for the sake of our souls. Investigate everything thoroughly, sanction the just, and banish the unjust. Begin with me, because the halo that surrounds me is the halo of royal greatness and not of theomachy. Have no scruples with princes, because of their riches, and do not neglect paupers, because of their insignificance. Do with your words and I will do by my deeds, you with your teaching and I by suggestion, you with instruction and I by resolution; let all of us lend each other a helping hand, in order to preserve the laws of God from profanity, and escape punishment, you as priests and I as a Queen, you as rulers and myself as a guardian.” 5

Hearing these words the gathering of the fathers thanked God and the Queen, so enlightened by Him. And Tamar sat with them for some time, and then receiving a blessing from them, retired to her chamber. 10

And the leaders of the assembly, Nik’olaoz and Ant’oni, who like the dawn, outstripped the others and shone like a pair of stars in heaven, did not wish to have among their company the Katholikos of Kartli, because he thoroughly distorted the ecclesiastical rules, and managed to obtain from the Lord by perfidy the position of the archbishop of Ch’q’ondidi and the archbishop of Ats’q’uri, as well as of *mts’ignobartukhutsesi*.<sup>14</sup> But they could not excommunicate him, despite trying mightily. However, they rid themselves of him soon enough, through God’s punishment. Other bishops were also dismissed, and godly men were assigned in their place; and they set right the ecclesiastical rules which were perverted by people who disregarded order. 15 20

When the council was coming to its end, the *sp’asalars*<sup>15</sup> and *eristavis* of the kingdom entered the room and announced to the elders the need to bring, by common effort, into the royal house, a fiancé for Tamar, which was then done. They gathered before Queen Rusudan and by unanimous decision sent an envoy to the kingdom of Russia, for the Russian tribes professed Christianity and orthodoxy. But they made a mistake, because the envoy they sent was not adequate to the charge, and they did not know whom he would bring back with him. 25

After some time, the envoy returned and brought a man with him, rather highborn, stronger than all the other kings of his country and fair in appearance.<sup>16</sup> Seeing him everybody liked him, but they knew nothing of his temperament.

The Patriarch<sup>17</sup> and *didebulis*,<sup>18</sup> *sp’asp’ets*<sup>19</sup> and *eristavis*<sup>20</sup> gathered before Queen Rusudan; they proposed to Tamar to unite conjugally with the Russian, and urged her to do so. And she answered: “How can you expect me to take such a hasty step? We know nothing of the conduct of this foreigner, nor of his deeds, or his valor, nature or disposition. Let me wait till we see his virtues or shortcomings.” But they opposed her, talking of her childlessness, of the barrenness of her house, demanding a leader for the army, and pressing on her soul by every means. They resembled deer, which sees only a face; or an elephant, which does not ponder what he leans his back upon; they crowded in on her in every way, trying to solve such a difficult problem without great forethought. 30 35

At last, after long wrangling and contrary to her will, they celebrated the wedding and for a long time remained joyful, as was proper for such an important occasion.

Some days later Tamar's prophesy began to come true. The Russian displayed his Scythian manners: together with a loathsome drunkenness, he began to do many improper things, about which there is no place to write here, as I do not wish to drag out my narration.

5 Tamar, like an anvil, cheerfully endured for two and a half years the vices of the Russian, and no one besides her could stand it anymore. The people around her began to grieve, feeling at the same time shame for insisting on Tamar's union. And the wise Tamar began to look for some means for healing him; she admonished him many times along with worthy monks, though it was to no benefit for the Russian. So at last she began to accuse him face to face. But the Russian grew yet more furious, like a man whom God had stripped of his cover. As it is said in the Scriptures: "We  
10 tried to heal Babylon, but could not cure it."<sup>21</sup> He not only rejected all advice, but began to commit still more destructive offences; he subjected honorable men to beating and to torture by tearing off their members.

All that became unbearable for Tamar, and she said to him in front of all the others: "I am taught by the law of God that a man should not leave his first conjugal bed,<sup>22</sup> but you should not patiently  
15 stay with a man who does not keep his bed pure, because he profanes the temple of God. I am unable to straighten the shadow of a crooked tree, and feel no guilt on my side; I must shake off the dust which has stuck to me from you." With that, she got up and left him. And Queen Rusudan and all the princes banished him in a way that might lead us to pity him. He himself felt wretched not so much because of his fall from the royal throne, but because of the loss of the Tamar's charms.

20 Again, everybody began grieving, because they saw Tamar childless and a lonely occupant of her house.

And there was a son of the Ossetian King, brought up by Rusudan, a youth beautiful in appearance as befits a King's son, and excellent in other respects. And what about his upbringing? He was a well-bred, brave, a powerful fighter, a knight who had no equal, a courageous archer,  
25 strong of body and perfect in all the virtues.

Everybody wanted him to unite with Tamar, and they entrusted everything to God. Tamar submitted to their will, because she knew the youth. Without delay they gathered in Didube and united David<sup>23</sup> and Tamar with conjugal bonds. From there they came to Tbilisi, and the two celestial  
30 bodies, two Suns, which illuminated the earth, mounted the happy thrones. And all the people rejoiced, young and old.

The signs of a happy life were evident: they undertook victorious campaigns into the upper and lower regions, and there was no enemy anywhere.

The Katholicos of Kartli, *ch'q'ondidel-mts'ignobartukhutsesi*, Mikael, son of Mirian, who owned Samtavisi,<sup>24</sup> died, but nobody was sorry for him, neither great, nor small, because everybody  
35 despised him.

*Amirsp'asalar*<sup>25</sup> Gamrek'eli died, and everybody grieved for him.

At that time a small uprising was organized by the Imeretians and Svans, due to the lack of order among them. And they brought the Russian with them, in order to make him king again. They also urged the Meskhis to join them, which they were not just unable to do, but still more turning  
40 them against themselves. The rebels were put to flight and, disgraced, they returned to their homes, for God was caring about Tamar.

Tamar prayed to God thinking about whom she might entrust David and her army to; and everything was subordinated to the power of her house. And in this respect, too, God, did not put her to shame, but filled her with wisdom and knowledge. And looking from above upon all the distinguished people of her kingdom, and considering everything in her mind, she entrusted the whole issue to God, and summoned Ant'oni Glonistavidze from Gareji, who was once a *ch'q'ondideli*, but was deprived of this rank by Mikael, the Katholikos of Kartli, due to the perfidy of a number of the King's advisers. They brought him to her. He was a praiseworthy man, a true Christian, honest, sincere, pure, kind, merciful to everybody, sympathetic, modest, and infinitely faithful to his master. There is no need to talk of his care for the churches and monasteries; his deeds testify to this everywhere: in Mghvime and in K'larjeti, as well as in all the other places there were monasteries founded by him. He was appointed a vizier, and given Ch'q'ondidi, Samtavisi, K'isiskhevi and the post of *mts'ignobartukhutsesi*. If an honest man stumbles, he still will not fall. 5 10

And they began to judge and consider what is good for the kingdom and best for the people.

So they called the two sons of *amirsp'asalar* Sargis Mkhargrdzeli – Zachariah and Ivane – wise and brave men, well-trying, and, according to family tradition, loyal to kings, for which they were greatly valued by Tamar's grandfathers. Tamar turned her eyes to them, trusting God, and she favored them and granted to Zachariah the post of *amirsp'asalar* and to his younger brother Ivane – the post of *msakhurtukhutsesi*.<sup>26</sup> They were worthy people, and being Armenians by faith, they respected orthodoxy. Ivane was an expert in the Holy Scripture, thanks to which he perceived the wrongness of the faith of the Armenians,<sup>27</sup> baptized himself and became a true Christian. 15 20

After that they called Ch'iaber, also an honest and faithful man, and gave him the post of *mandat'urtukhutsesi*.<sup>28</sup>

Day by day Tamar's affairs became more successful, and the government of the country was more honest and wiser.

Starting from here, anyone who wishes to describe the successes of Tamar in her undertakings, would need a broad mind and a judicious tongue. As nobody can count every single hair on the head of a man, so none can describe Tamar's deeds, and if somebody could do it, it would be doubted by posterity. 25

But we know a lion by its claws, and Tamar by her deeds; who wants to know her, let him see the towns, fortresses and regions, which once belonged to the sultans and were taken by her; the frontiers, which she doubled in size compared to those she received on ascending the throne, and which were the ultimate limits of the kingdom. The person seeking the truth regarding the works of Tamar will recognize her by these things. Let him learn of the tribute she laid upon the lands, which stretched from Georgia to Iraq and from Baghdad to Maragha.<sup>29</sup> It is enough (to say) that the Caliph, in person, prays to the Creator for mercy. 30 35

Thanks to the grace of God, the Christian people lived happily, though everybody worried and grieved on account of Tamar's childlessness.

But God, who turned His eyes upon Manoah and Abraham, and the women Hannah and Elisabeth, here too, did not lose much of His time.<sup>30</sup> A little later Tamar conceived. Learning of this, everybody began performing litanies, fasting, praying and crying – imploring God to give her a son. 40

And so it happened; she gave birth to a son, who resembled his grandfather very much. And he was given the name Giorgi. And everybody rejoiced, feeling inexpressible joy.

One year later she conceived again and bore Rusudan, who was of her likeness, on which occasion everybody rejoiced still more.

5 And the country became still happier because of the accumulation of all kinds of earthly goods, and because of the victories gained by the army.

The Georgians began to devastate Persia from every side, winning amazing victories: the occupants of the fortresses abandoned them when ordered to do so. Every man was enriched by the taking of prisoners and the spoils of war. And those among the enemy who managed to escape hid themselves like foxes, and crept into holes like moles.

10 The Persians were pressed on all sides; they were seized by powerlessness and cherished only one hope, the hope to escape with their own death. So they gathered together, and painting their clothes and faces, appeared before the Caliph and informed him of their misfortunes, asking him to mobilize the whole of Persia<sup>31</sup> to help them. And the Caliph did as he was asked: he opened ancient treasuries and sent (his) people secretly all over Persia. He gave them gold in abundance so that they would gather as many troops as possible from all the countries that belonged to Persia. And he gave an order that if from some principalities of Persia people refused to come, they should be attacked, and the place where they lived, devastated. And so it happened.

20 Troops began to gather, flowing from the regions of Romgur<sup>32</sup> and India and further afield from Samarkand and Daruband. They were without number, and there was no place enough for them in any one country. They gathered in Adarbadagan,<sup>33</sup> and only then did they reveal their hostile intentions.

Tamar was informed of all this. She called all her viziers and took counsel with them. She ordered Ant'oni Ch'q'ondideli<sup>34</sup> firmly, though without any rudeness: "Quickly write and send out a decree on the immediate mobilization of our army, and then ask all the churches and monasteries everywhere to perform night services and litanies. Send money and all the necessities to paupers, so they can find time for prayers and can propitiate God so that the unbelieving have no occasion to ask: "Where is their God?"

30 And her order became a fact. Ten days after that, all the warriors flocked together like falcons from all sides, joyful, hardly restraining themselves. They gathered in Somkhiti.<sup>35</sup> Tamar arrived. She observed them. She remained there for some days to take part in public prayers. Then she told them: "My brothers, let not your hearts tremble for fear that there are so many of them, while you are so few, for God is with us. You have heard of Gideon and the three hundred men he commanded, and of the countless Madianites he defeated, and of the camp of the Assyrians which was destroyed in a moment by an angel in answer to Ezekias' prayer.<sup>36</sup> Trust only one God, strengthen your hearts before Him with truth, and set your hopes without reserve on the cross of Christ. Now with the help of the Holy Mother of God, storm their country and assault the enemy with the power of the invincible Cross."

40 She prayed and entrusted them to God, and placed the life giving cross in front of them as their guide, and sent Ant'oni Ch'q'ondideli with them.

Taking off her shoes, she went barefoot to the church of the Mother of God in Met'ekhi, then falling down before the holy icon and shedding tears, she did not cease praying until God fulfilled her requests. A few days later Sargis Mkhargrdzeli-Tmogveli came and brought the wonderful news with him of the victory of the army,<sup>37</sup> and added that (Georgian) troops suffered no harm.<sup>38</sup>

But now we have to relate about the help our troops received from the tears of Tamar. They entered the enemy's country and saw their forces camped between Ganja and Shamkhor, like numerous locusts.

They dismounted their horses at once, bowed to God and prayed before the holy cross with tears in their eyes, and like eagles they dashed upon the enemy and struck them like tigers. Using their arms and God's power, in the very first attack they threw confusion into the enemy troops, which outnumbered ours by ten. They destroyed them like mice, and caught like little chickens the great *amirs* of Baghdad and Mosul, and those from Africa<sup>39</sup> and Iraq, Adarbadagan and Iran, and from many other places where the enemy had drawn its auxiliary troops, such as, for example, the detachment of butchers from India. They brought them to King David by their beards. And the great, wonderful and extreme assistance of God could be seen in everything, because the enemies themselves brought their merchandise, they drove in loaded camels and mules and themselves guarded the spoils and prisoners, which had been taken from them. And Atabek Bubakar,<sup>40</sup> who boasted once of his great horse and his power, finding some small hollow, buried himself there in the earth.

Lavishly showered with God's favors, the army reached Ganja. The citizens came out to meet them, asking for peace, and sacrificed their town by their own decision. They brought David into the palace, seated him on the throne intended for sultans, sounded the Sultan's *panjanobat*<sup>41</sup> and presented a great feast, gorging themselves on pork. Every one of the Ganjians brought rich presents and tribute; the Georgians opened the treasury and took many refined cups and dishes, together with many other treasures. And for a few days they camped outside the town, for they wanted to catch the Atabek, but they could not find him.

In a similar way, the Shamkhorians begged for peace and protection. Here Zachariah and Ivane had poorly managed things, but that was the only flaw in their complete victory. There was a man, a Persian, a son-in-law of the Shirvan-shah, by the name of Mirmiran.<sup>42</sup> He approached Tamar with some request and found protection with her. At the time he was in David's service; and this Mirmiran solicited Ganja for himself, and it was given to him for preservation, before they even informed Tamar.

As soon as Bubakar learned of the turning back of our troops, he appeared before Ganja and the Ganjians handed the town over to him, but he let Mirmiran off alive, fearing vengeance.

After the passing of a few days, the troops came home to Georgia, feeling great joy on account of this Olympian victory, worthy of much greater praise than the victory gained by Alexander over Darius.

When they approached Tbilisi, Tamar came out to meet them, for Sargis Tmogveli had already appeared before her as a herald. She rejoiced and thanked God, and asked each of the coming men about his health, considering them as her children. And they rejoiced to see her.

All the fields around Tbilisi were overcrowded, and could contain no more people, horses, mules or camels. So great was the number of captives that they were brought into the town and sold for a wooden measure of flour. Witness to this is the truthful God, whose name I mention here so that no reader in future times will consider it a lie or a fairy tale.

5 In fact, the distinguished men,<sup>43</sup> Zachariah and Ivane, took one fifth from the royal treasury of the vanquished, and lined up the camels, all with packs, and the horses, all with decorations, in the valley of Didube; and these lines stretched down to Avch'ala. They lined up also the captured leaders, each with his banner. And the first among the banners was the banner of the Caliph, then of the Atabek and so on, one after the other. They lined up all the prisoners from the city gates down  
10 to the ravine of Gldani. They were brought in a stately manner to Tamar and offered her the spoils as a gift, and brought to her all the leaders of Persia who bowed in subjection before her.

They bowed to her and congratulated her on the happy reign that God had granted her.

After that they entered the city, and each offered his gifts: gold and adornments and utensils of gold, precious stones and priceless pearls, chainmail, helmets, well-used swords, colored and gold-  
15 brocaded cloths and rich dresses, horses and mules, golden necklaces, studded by precious stones and pearls, different kinds of incense and aromatic substances, all brought in copper vessels. They offered everything, starting with the fortress of Anak'opia and ending with the fortress of Gulist'an.<sup>44</sup> The estates<sup>45</sup> of *aznauris* were overfilled with prisoners, and all the treasuries with gold, as if it was dirt, and Indian stones and many precious pearls.

20 But did Tamar's heart become a little prouder due to all these things? Did she demonstrate arrogance by haughtily lifting her brows?

Not in the least!

On the contrary, she kept herself yet more modest before God, offering Him thanks and asking for mercy. She filled the hands of those who asked her for help, and filled the skirts of beggars;  
25 she enriched institutions that cared for churches, widows and orphans, paupers and all the needy in general. To please God, she presented her kingdom to the One, who entrusted her with its governance, and she donated to Him, who gave her everything from His rich and inexhaustible vessels, her wealth.

30 She differed from the kings of old by her deeds, and she was far ahead of those of her time who did novel things, by doing yet newer and more important ones, some of which we have related above. I will state the words of the Scripture: "There was firmness in our country and peace on the peaks of the mountains."

And not only wealth grew in our country, but faith strengthened; the churches were adorned in every way, the services, including the night ones, were held in increased number, particularly in the  
35 palace, where the rites of the sacrament were performed continuously. But why prattle on so much? God's grace was increasing, and the evil that comes from the devil, decreasing.

Each labored in his way to earn the approval of Tamar, and she, too, appointed such people to prominent places for their worthy deeds. Those on the frontiers (*monap'ireni*)<sup>46</sup> labored day and night, without a moment's rest, and the ones serving in the kingdom's interior, longed to be sent to the  
40 border areas. And such diligence and zeal from everybody's side brought (in the end) the kingdom

to such a strong position. The first lower border point was Gagi, which was owned by Zachariah Mkhargrdzeli, father of Varam; both were the frontier guards there, both brave and victorious in battles, deserving great praise in their godliness and devotion to their master.

Further up, the border followed the rivers of Dzorak'ert'<sup>47</sup> and T'ashir; from there Zachariah and Ivane began to fight like lions, first in the upper and lower regions,<sup>48</sup> and then in other places. Further up was Javakheti, where the border guards were Sargis Mkhargrdzeli-Tmogveli and Shalva Toreli. Still further was Art'aani,<sup>49</sup> where the border guards were the Meskhis, and Q'varq'vare among them, the *sp'asalar* of Samtskhe, Jaq'eli, always a victorious man and faithful to kings.

On the side of Shavsheti and Sp'eri was Panask'ert'i. There in the mountains of Shavsheti one man, Asp'aanisdze by name, had shown himself an able man. He was of noble birth and behaved decently. His first name was Zachariah. He did not shame his name and did not let his master's favors go to waste; on the contrary, he devoted his life to praiseworthy deeds. He performed many great acts: he seized Bana, Khakhuli and other glorious fortresses and places.

Down on the border, the frontier guards were the K'erdz Grigolisdzes and, particularly, T'beli and Mahat'lisdze, who inspired such fear that in Ganja and Barda<sup>50</sup> even a child could not cry in his mother's hands, and the Turks could do no damage to the pastures on the banks of the Iori and Mt'k'vari.

But reading all this, let nobody think that anybody (ever) did anything without Tamar's knowledge; you have to understand: the frontier guards if they found something to do, a fortress to seize, or heard of the approach of the Turkmans or had to destroy a town, or ravage a country, they would first report to Tamar, and she herself considered and investigated the issue. If it was worth calling in the army, she ordered Zachariah or Ivane to gather troops, while King David, who had always returned victorious from all his campaigns, led these armies himself.

If the issue was not so important, she ordered the palace troops<sup>51</sup> to mount their horses at once, and like falcons, they did their job. If she was in the field, or at a hunt, or by herself at home, and she learned of the designs of her enemies, she would immediately order some worthy men to their horses, and they would frighten the enemy, like eagles scare partridges.

And she, too, never being idle herself, did not allow her knights to remain inactive; this is what one chronicler says of Alexander.

And the truth of these words will be confirmed by the following: one year's income of the glorious city of Tbilisi could not even cover gifts to the messengers who brought in happy news. Often, three or four messengers would come with good news on one and the same day, and relate what had happened. For instance, if our men did some worthy thing, they sent a messenger with the news of their victory; but not being content with the harvest of that day, they would continue their endeavor, and when God granted them another piece of luck, they would send another messenger with happy news to follow the first messenger.

It would be impossible to count all the deeds and successes like this. Because one deed was achieved in the upper regions and another – in the lower regions, and so during one day, Tamar would receive much happy news and many new messengers, about which it is impossible to relate in more detail, for they are known only to God.

Tirelessly performing all these things, Tamar cared little about her own well-being; she seized so many towns and fortresses, not just to annex them to her kingdom, but to give them to those who she urged to work without respite, that is, to her army. Witness the great and glorious capital of the Armenian kings, Ani, which she took away from the Persians, together with Shahinshah, which was  
5 in their possession for a long time, as well as the capital of the kings of Persia – the glorious Dvin.

And all that she did for two reasons: first, so that the heathen, who envied each other, would fight one another to get back the things which were theirs, and second, to eliminate every source that could generate disloyalty among her subjects.

She did not allow her army to stay idle, though even in leisure time they did not become lazy and  
10 dependent on other people, or rise and rest on their riches; they had no time to quarrel and wage war with one other, as some did in the beginning of her reign, notably the children of K'akhaber. These were the fruit, brought up on the same rotten roots of Lip'arit', who plotted and fought with their neighbors, who in spite of all the denunciations and favors granted by Tamar, did not realize the foulness of their deeds, and felt no shame for them, but began again to do the things which the  
15 chronicle of old told us about. As they say of the dog's tail or the coat's hem, they committed a great evil. They killed two brothers of Ant'on Ch'q'ondideli, casting the great and just man into sorrow and drawing the wrath of God and Tamar on their heads. And so Tamar, stationed at that time in Ch'ala, summoned in her wisdom all five of the children, arrested them and put each in separate fortress, giving them an opportunity to improve. But because they remained the same, she banished them to  
20 Greek Macedonia, where they were killed by Q'ipchaks in a battle, as glorious knights.

That is why she allowed nobody to remain idle: when at her side, she made her people happy and granted them all kinds of gifts according to their merits, and provided them with moral peace, or, led them in a hunt on the banks of Iori and Mt'k'vari. Then stopping at some woody place, they might indulge themselves in joy, until snow heavily covered their tents. From there they moved on  
25 and entered Somkhiti, where they hunted, as if playing a pleasant game.

And if during these entertainments there came some news from any place of a danger threatening the kingdom, or if they saw such danger, Tamar would not even for a moment fall under the spell of a tranquil sleep, or relax her body. She did not permit anything bad that was contemplated against the kingdom to happen.

30 The waters in the Nile rose and the prices in Egypt fell; Ismail, was deprived, Hagar was deposed and Isaac was blessed. It was said by somebody, and I cite these words as an opening, for the Mohammedans lost their forces, and their tumbrels remained without a man to beat them, while the loud sounds of the Christians filled the country from end to end.

The hopes of the Muslims were running out, and totally powerless they appealed to the mercy  
35 of Tamar. They went again to the Caliph, but not like the first time, now in quite a different way; they implored him to beg Tamar to take only tribute from them, and to cease her destructive sword, and to take off the fetters that bound them.

And the Caliph did the following: he sent envoys twice to Tamar, and sent many and various  
40 kingly gifts, hitherto unseen, and with utmost deference asked Tamar to only take tribute and stop the devastation.

Tamar listened to these entreaties and replied: "I will fulfill your request, and to those, who want peace for themselves and to bring me tribute, I, on my part, will grant life, in compliance with your request." And so it was done.

This caused spiritual pain to the Sultan of Rum,<sup>52</sup> Nukardin,<sup>53</sup> son of Charaslan, and he perfidiously asserted his alleged love (for Tamar) and constantly sent envoys in order to preserve peace, and many excellent gifts. Tamar did the same, and sent him envoys with gifts in return.

But Nukardin was hiding his perfidy, and under the cover of oaths of loyalty tried to spy on our kingdom. For this purpose he opened the treasuries of his fathers and grandfathers and began to distribute gold in abundance to gather an army, and he gave an order to recruit troops twice as much as was due. And he sent his people to the borders of his state, and began to gather troops in Mesopotamia and K'alonero, Galat'ia, Ghangra, Ankiria, Isavria, Cappadocia, Greater Armenia, Bithynia and at the borders of Paphlagonia,<sup>54</sup> arming everyone in these countries except the women.

And he himself scurried to the Turks, called Ujads,<sup>55</sup> who were brave in battle and great in number, like locusts or ants. He gave them much gold and still more gifts, and so managed to gather a hundred thousand horsemen among them.

He also mobilized – contrary to their will and urged only by fear – the inhabitants of Ezinka, Khalperd, K'arnukalaki,<sup>56</sup> and the son of Saldukh; from the latter he afterwards took away K'arnukalaki, to which he assigned his own brother.<sup>57</sup>

Nukardin was like an amphibious hedgehog, a prolific animal which seeing its numerous litter, takes them out of its hole and arranges them into groups, then climbs up on them in order to rise above them like a tower: seeing so many soldiers gathered, who exceeded any number he had seen, he became proud like Senakerem,<sup>58</sup> and decided to rise above God. He forgot the perfidious oaths and vows of love formerly given by him, and did quite the opposite of what he had said. He came to the city of Sevast'ia<sup>59</sup> and began to prepare his fighting machines. Then he sent an envoy to Tamar with the following message:

"I, Nukardin, the Sultan of the entire world under heaven, the highest one, likened to the angels sitting beside God, sent (here) by the Great Mohammed, notify you of this, Tamar, the Queen of Georgia. You ordered the Georgians to take up arms and destroy God's beloved Islamic people; then not satisfied with this, you imposed a vassal's tribute on a free tribe. Now I am coming to restore justice for the house of the Persians, and to reform you and your people so that you will never dare to take the sword up again, which God has granted us. I will preserve life only to those who will come to my tent before I enter your country and humbly ask for mercy and assume the faith of the Prophet Mohammed and reject your faith, and break with their own hands the cross, on which they vainly set their hopes. And now wait for reprisals from me for the troubles you have inflicted upon all Muslims."

Receiving and reading the message, Tamar showed no haste at all, but behaved modestly like the second Ezekias. She held out the message to God and gave a deep sigh from the bottom of her heart, shedding hot tears and placing her hopes in God. Then she called those whom she had by her, and took counsel with them, not like a helpless person, or a woman, and did not neglect the dictates of reason.

Her decrees and orders were spread around the kingdom with the speed of the wind by her messengers. And in a few days warriors gathered, resembling tigers in their agility and lions in their courage. Setting their hopes on Christ, on God, and without losing a moment, they went to the church of the Holy Mother of God in Vardzia. There, praying before the Vardzia Mother of God with  
5 tears in her eyes, the Queen entrusted Her with David Soslan and his army, and the banner proved to be lucky. Tamar sent the army from Vardzia, and accompanied it barefoot, her cheeks wet with tears.

And when they approached the town of K'ari<sup>60</sup> at a distance of one day's walk,<sup>61</sup> only then did she send off the envoys of the Sultan and her own messenger with them, writing an answer as  
10 follows:

"I, who entrusted herself to the Omnipotent and Almighty God, and ever praying to the Virgin Mary, and with faith and hopes on the Holy Cross, read your message, which enrages God. Oh, Nukardin don't you know that every man who falsely swears by the name of the Lord will be wiped off the earth? While you write me such things I am sending you an army of Christ lovers, not  
15 to ask humbly for mercy, but to crush your arrogance and presumption, to teach you, with God's assistance, not to abuse His name. And knowing of the corruption and unreliability of your servants, I am sending you mine, so that he will hand you as soon as possible the answer to your message, and warn you in time as the soldiers I have sent are already waiting at your gates."

Such was the message she gave to the envoy, after which they dressed him and gave him gifts,  
20 and so she sent away the Sultan's envoy.

After that she ordered all her men to mount their horses, and she herself ascended to a high place from where she could observe all of them; and she fell on her knees and cried for a long time, praying to God. When she rose, people could see that the place where she had been kneeling was wet from her tears. Then she summoned all the nobles and ordered the *eristavis* to approach one by  
25 one the Holy Cross, to bow before it and kiss it. And they came and begged, crying, for victory and bowed before the Holy Cross and kissed it, and kissed Tamar's hand as well.

Each bowed before her, a holy person, for she held the wood of the Cross with one hand, while the governor of the King's court<sup>62</sup> and the cross-bearer, Basil, held it by its other side.

When they finished worshipping the Cross in this way, Tamar took the Holy Cross herself, made  
30 a sign of a cross three times at each side, blessed her people mounted on their horses, and then they set out trusting in God and Tamar's tears.

The Queen turned to Samtskhe and coming in Odzrkhe, she prayed and fasted. There was Tevdore, Katholikos of Kartli, a holy and good man, at her side along with many God-faring bishops and monks. They performed night services and litanies.

Now we must tell how by solicitation to the Holy Mother of God, and with the help of the life-giving cross, God favored his people. When our troops came to the country of Basiani,<sup>63</sup> they found the Sultan encamped there. Approaching the Sultan's camp they saw that the enemy was camped at ease, and the Sultan did not even have guards for himself. The Georgians formed a detachment, and urging on their horses, they made their way to their enemy. When the Turks saw our forces approach  
40 them threateningly, they left their camp and rushed to their fortifications, for God inspired them with

great terror. The Christians seeing that their enemies had fled, rushed after them preventing their flight and surrounding them. And God delivered the enemy to their hands, and a wonderful thing happened, for the defeated tied up with their own hands those among them who had escaped death by the sword. The more important were bound by their less distinguished companions, and nobler men were fastened to horse's tails; one man tied up twenty with one rope, attaching them one to the other by their hair. Under-aged youths were bringing in the best warriors like children. The soldiers searched in all places, killing the runaways and gathering others like chickens; they freed numberless captives, because for (every) hundred Muslims there was hardly one Christian who could take them as prisoners.

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God granted such a great victory because of the tears and the firm faith of Tamar.<sup>64</sup> And when all was finished they turned to their (enemy's) belongings, the richest spoils; and it was impossible to survey or to count the gold and silver tableware, the fine clothes, the gold bowls, plates and saucers, covered by precious stones and pearls, as well as jugs and kettles, full of inconceivable treasure. And who could count the number of horses, mules and camels, as well as the tents and carpets, which they had left behind them?

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By that time the townsfolk had adorned Tbilisi, and Tamar and David entered the city, beaming like the halo of the Sun, and brought in the banner of Nukardin. Then they brought first into the town, the owner of Ezinka, and then the other noble persons Tamar chose. She consoled everybody and entertained everyone, providing a feast; then she presented everybody, each according to his merit and sent them to fortresses, with the exception of the owner of Ezinka, whom she detained in Tbilisi as a prisoner, her honor and love replaced by anger. In the end she sold this distinguished and noble man for a horseshoe. This is what Tamar did for the honor and glory of her house, a thing that nobody had ever done since the beginning of the world.

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Again, all the royal depositories were filled with gold and golden utensils, because people showered gold upon the Queen as if it were mere earth; and precious stones and pearls were poured into the treasuries, and gold-brocaded items produced in Greece and rare clothes were piled up without number as if they were trash. Silver utensils were not valued any more in the royal palace, because everything that was put on a table was of gold and cut-glass, adorned by Indian stones. With part of it the Queen filled up all the churches, another part of the treasures she granted for the performance of holy sacraments, and she filled up the palms of every one asking for alms, and satiated all the beggars and lavishly stuffed their pockets with goods.

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So God raises those who worship Him, He elevates the humble ones, He assists those who set their hopes upon Him; such gifts he grants to those who trust Him. So it happened with Tamar, because she kept no other thing in her heart besides "the origin of wisdom, the fear of God,"<sup>65</sup> and justice and grace which she distributed equally among all.

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Truth and peace without end reigned in her days; her lips covered the world with grace. For that, God gave her His eternal blessing and put on her head the crown of honor. He girded her with the sword of power, and she left this world for the other in order to enjoy the eternal life she was granted as reward for her labors to establish the truth, peace and the law.

We should also say that many other women showed their power, but not one did it like Tamar. Guided by wisdom, truthfulness and the purity of David, she arranged the lives of her people not by force of perfidy, but by the spiritual calm which distinguished Jacob, by the generosity of Abraham, by kindness which resembled the mercifulness of Jesus, and by imitating His justice.

5        There was no man at the time of Tamar's reign, who was subject to violence with her knowledge; not one was punished, with the exception of cases under the old law, which concerned robbers, when hanging on a tree was applied. Even those who deserved the death penalty and those who deserved banishment were not punished as they deserved, and nobody was subject to the cutting off of members or by blinding by her order, with the exception of Guzan,<sup>66</sup> who had treacherously left  
10       the Queen and began plundering somewhere in K'ola,<sup>67</sup> hiding in the mountains. He was caught by hay mowers and brought to King David. And he, knowing how infinitely merciful Tamar was, gouged out his eyes, before informing her, because of the Christian blood so abundantly spilled by Guzan.

      There was prosperity not only in Tamar's own kingdom, but for all the Christians. And from everyone who committed violence against Christians, she demanded immediate obedience for fear  
15       and love for her.

      She sent her agents around, instructing them: "Travel from Alexandria and through the entire territory of Lubia<sup>68</sup> and Mount Sinai."<sup>69</sup> She learned of the needs of the churches, monasteries and the Christian peoples of these countries. And do we need to mention Jerusalem? To the churches of all these lands she sent chalices and patens, and shrouds for sacred objects, much gold for  
20       monks and beggars, and ransomed from slavery those who were captured by infidels; and she compensated for the tribute paid by people to Muslims, and so removed the oppressive burden from their shoulders.

      She did the same in the regions of Hellas and the Holy Mount,<sup>70</sup> and also in Macedon, P'et'rits'oni,<sup>71</sup> in the lands of Thrace, and in the monasteries of Constantinople and Romana,<sup>72</sup> and everywhere, as  
25       well as in Isavria and K'uruseti<sup>73</sup> and all the surrounding areas of the Black Mountain<sup>74</sup> and Cyprus. All these lands she filled with good works, and God protected her labor.

      Once, as often happened, some monks came from the Black Mountain, Antioch and the island of Cyprus, as well as from the Holy Mountain and many other places to ask her to do some things. She received them, as she was wont to, like angels, and did not let them go; then she gave everybody  
30       great gifts and furnished them with all necessities; and to those living farthest away, she gave much gold for their own disposal and for distribution in the monasteries. The monks departed, and when they came to Constantinople, Alexis Angar,<sup>75</sup> the man who gouged out the eyes of his brother Isaac and deprived him of his kingdom, learned of their arrival. He was a despicable man unworthy to bear royal power; he was despised by everyone, in particular for his cupidity. He saw the large amount of  
35       gold, which Tamar had given to the monks, and took it from them.

      When Queen Tamar learned of this, she sent yet more gold in the name of the holy fathers, and so put the devil to still more shame. But angry at the Greek King, she sent a small army from Western Georgia<sup>76</sup> and took Lazika,<sup>77</sup> Trabzon, Limon, Samison, Sinop', Kerasunt, K'it'ora, Amast'ria, Arak'lia<sup>78</sup> and all the lands of Peblaghon and Pont from the Greeks and gave them to her relative<sup>79</sup>  
40       Comnenos,<sup>80</sup> son of Andronicus,<sup>81</sup> who was then with Queen Tamar, finding shelter with her.

The Franks<sup>82</sup> learned that the Greeks had lost support from the East; they seized the Greeks' capital city and expelled the royal power; the unfortunate Alexis fled to Bulgaria,<sup>83</sup> to his son-in-law. When the Bulgarian King saw him, he took him to a castle and throwing down much gold before him, said: "Here, Alexis, is the object of your desire, take this gold instead of food and drink, because for the sake of this gold you have ruined the royal Christian house and destroyed the autocracy of the Greeks." And so this wretched man died of starvation, devoid of God's help.

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Tamar was dreadful to her enemies, but she was so warm-hearted and forgiving that she mourned the whole event with a heavy heart; but it was not worthwhile grieving about Alexis, because if you acquire something by means of falsehood, you will not retain it for long. But Tamar was tender hearted to strangers and weak; she was compassionate and showed them mercy, as with this gold-loving man.

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In the twenty third or twenty fourth year of her reign, Queen Tamar showed interest in K'ari;<sup>84</sup> for a long time Sargis Tmogveli, Shalva Toreli and the Meskhis had fought for this town, though they were unable to capture it despite all the different means they tried. Due to the fierceness of the winters and severe cold, they could not approach the town. They could not give battle because the water had frozen during the time of frosts. They captured all the surrounding fortresses and villages, only this one remained in the hands of the Persians. Considering the circumstances, Tamar, using her intelligent mind, dispatched David at the head of the army in Upper Kartli, and sent Zachariah and Ivane to help him, ordering the latter two to take their troops there, and fight the enemy with all their forces. This took a long time. Staying in Javakheti, Tamar waited for news. After arriving, the troops began by smashing a blockade built in the shape of a solid wall, which held the town's water, and after many days of labor, they breached it. The water ran out and that was the end for the most of the townsfolk. Those remaining asked David to arrange a meeting with Tamar, in order to make a deal with her. They were afraid of reprisals for the abuses they had showered on the Georgians from the walls of the fortress.

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Then the Georgians reported to Tamar about all this. She came, and those who were in the fortress brought her the city key, first to her son Giorgi and then to Tamar, and petitioned for peace and a promise that the Queen would not transfer K'ari to foreign hands as she had done with Ani and Dvin, but would hold onto it herself and keep it within the precincts of her kingdom.<sup>85</sup> The Queen gave them a solemn promise, and ordered her son Giorgi to enter K'ari and take the town and the fortress. And so it was done. The Queen herself secured this one town and fortress among all those which had been seized while conquering (the lands) from Dzorak'ert' to Rakhs,<sup>86</sup> from Gaga to Ganja, and from Javakheti down to Sp'eri.<sup>87</sup>

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Whoever thinks that all these works performed by Tamar during these seventeen years<sup>88</sup> are not enough, and all the feats accomplished by her army during this one year are not enough, and who cannot imagine how Tamar managed to cope with all these foreign affairs, let him cast an eye at the upper lands and see the fortresses owned by the houses of Mkhargrdzeli in the upper and lower regions.<sup>89</sup>

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My lips, which so joyfully relate these happy events, now turn to sad things, for I am going to tell you of the event that plunged the entire world into sorrow.

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Tamar stopped in Nach'armagevi, a place located high in the mountains. And all the *didebulis* and nobles were there with her. She took care of the state's affairs and particularly those related to the churches and monasteries.

And while she was there, she caught a disease, one that eats away at us people; it progressed day after day, becoming more and more severe. She hid it for a long time, so as not to worry anybody. But when the illness resisted treatment, with no benefit from medicine, the Queen revealed she had it. This disease of Tamar was probably inevitable; such long-lasting military burdens prey upon the natural weakness of women, and Tamar's body could not live and remain protected from all kinds of accidents.

But see, the people, who were devoted to her deserve much pity: how could they deal with such a disease? They took her in a palanquin to Tbilisi, and a few days later they decided, as they were wont to do, to climb into the woody mountains. They were in a hurry, and took Tamar there, still, in the palanquin. But her merciless disease took on yet graver form. They brought her to the fortress of Agari.<sup>90</sup>

And all the searches for a medical cure turned out to be vain. And wherever the Queen rested, whatever the places, litanies and endless night services were performed, and you could see how rich and poor alike were shedding tears.

But the verdict was one of no resistance.

The day began to approach its end, the Sun was setting, and the air was shot through with a colorless light. Dark clouds smothered the dawn. The rosy cheeks of the Queen began to fade, and her eyes, resembling lakes which could stand up to any comparison with the Sun, were losing their luster. Her arms which had never got tired of serving the poor, began to weaken, her legs, ever ready to serve God, were giving way, and all the signs of life began to disappear.

A general feeling of impotence<sup>91</sup> took possession of everybody; nobody knew what to do. The *mtavaris*<sup>92</sup> were slapping themselves across the face, the paupers – beating their heads. All people, devoted to her, proposed that God take their own lives or the lives of their children in place of the Queen, and asked Him to send them to their death. "Let her remain alive, and destroy us all." So said the people surrounding in crowds the chamber of the palace that contained the bed of our misfortune. If there was any possibility, they would apply all their efforts to prevent death from approaching her. Was there any other means of fighting the disease that had not been tried, such as prayers and grieving? But the one that called her, stood already in the doorway, and it was impossible to resist him.

And here, too, the wise Tamar found beatitude and wisdom. For she summoned all the distinguished people of her kingdom, and bracing herself, appearing cheerful in appearance, told them: "My brothers and sisters! The dreadful judge who is more fearful than earthly kings, who takes away people's souls, has called for me. You were yourselves witnesses of my love to you, which I have stored in my heart; I never took away anything that was your share or was the object of your desire, and I was honored for the time, which according to God's purpose, I was your queen. Now I, too, am going to my fathers, following an unknown way, obedient to the frightful order and the wonderful design. And I implore everybody: do good always and pray for me. I am leaving as heirs

to my house those, whom God gave me, my children, Giorgi and Rusudan; receive them instead of me, and let them make up for the loss that my death causes you."

In this way she entrusted her children to them, and did it before the image of Christ and the life-giving cross. And then she said for the last time: "Christ, my God, the eternal King of heaven and earth, I entrust you this kingdom, which You have charged me with, and this people that you redeemed with your holy blood, and these children of mine, who you granted me, and now here is my soul."

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Then weeping bitterly everybody left the chamber. On the eighteenth of January, Tamar fell asleep with the sleep of a righteous one; and the Sun went out of Georgia, and only the urge to glorify her grave, gave sense to the earthly life among all us Christians.

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Now what we have yet to tell you is of the howl that took place on account of this sad news, and of the pitch dark and inconsolable grief; for who may be a comforter when the sorrow is universal. The face of the earth became loathsome. Every man who only knew the name of Tamar cut his hair. The underworld began to shake with the sounds of moaning. Everybody went into mourning. It was as if heaven and earth were grieving with us.

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Then they brought her remains and rested them for just a few days in the cathedral in Mtskheta, after which, they buried them in Gelati, in her family tomb, so that she would be praised together with her forefathers and fathers, the eminent great kings.

And the joy of the Georgians gave way to grief, for their lips resembled now a saltless soil, the (same) lips of the (same) people, who before her death were pronouncing nothing but the name of Tamar; for they wrote odes to her in acrostic on the walls of their houses, and, adorning their seals, knives and sticks, they wrote praises to Tamar. And everybody's mouth was ever ready to utter some suitable praise for Tamar, whether boys, or ox-drivers furrowing the soil with their ploughs, performing songs which glorified Tamar. Musicians in Iraq sang the songs composed in honor of Tamar. The Franks and Greeks, sailors at sea in favorable weather, praised Tamar.

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So the entire world was full of her praise, and every language in which her name was pronounced, exalted her. Is there need at all to talk of her works? For the rumors of them run all over the world, the evidence of which we have already seen.

As one wise saying goes, there is no fault in trying to do the things which exceed your powers, even though the beginning and the end of such accomplishments resemble each other as the weight and value of gold resembles those of dry grass. How must I find the proper words? Which of her virtues must I tell in the beginning, and which in the end? Shall it be her indescribable modesty or excessive sublimity, her praiseworthy tranquility, her proper firmness, her heartfelt compassion, gracious kindness, innocent chastity, artless honesty, all-embracing goodness or incredible generosity? She possessed the prerequisites of all qualities, notably she was inspired with fear before the Almighty and faithfully served God. And only due to this was she able to achieve the things, which no other man could achieve. Evidence of this is in all the kingdoms adjacent to Georgia: how many kings reduced to poverty she again helped acquire wealth, how many defeated among them received their kingdoms from her hands, how many outcasts had their domains restored by her and how many sentenced to death, she pardoned. Witnesses to this are the sovereign houses of Shirvan

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and Daruband, the Ghundzes, Ossetians, Kashags,<sup>93</sup> K'arnukalakians and Trabzonians. The Queen granted independence to all of them and vouched to protect them from their enemies.

Nobody followed the law of God with such zeal, as she did, and nobody bowed his head with such humility. Church services and vigils, performed at her palace, excelled the prayers of Theodosius the  
5 Great, and, I am sure, those of the Anchorites. And what to say of her fasts; she herself watched over how the monks and the courtiers observed their fasts.

It is impossible to describe her adoration for priests and monks. There were always people with her who followed the rules of the pious life. She always arranged accommodations for them close to her chambers, and provided them with food and all the necessary things. And if somebody was  
10 sick among them, she herself visited him and comforted him, and with her own hands prepared the bed for him.

She appointed faithful supervisors over the poor. The tenth part of the entire state's income, internal as well as external, she handed out to paupers, and made sure that not even one grain of barley was lost. Doing all these things she did not think she was performing godly acts of charity.  
15 Finishing her work, she set at once to spinning or sewing, and the things she produced with her hands she distributed among the priests and paupers.

So (it may be said that) the rules, sanctioned once and forever, the expression of the virtues of the great God, she observed not so much by beginning actions, but rather by their completion; like the Sun, she cast the light of her halo upon everyone, treating everyone with the same respect.  
20 By the graces she dispensed on everybody she induced God to do the same, and thus she strengthened her friends, and most importantly, without the help of something obtained by lies or injustice.

She never relaxed or neglected her duties as sovereign; she did not allow her mind to neglect the works she had been charged with; she never yielded in her mind to any cowardly temptation that  
25 drags a man down; she did not refrain from displaying modesty and did not ignore (the necessity of being) majestic too. She did not disdain a moment's softness but showed respect for firmness too; she mixed everything with everything in order to represent all that filled her. She was perfection even among the perfect.

Submitting to the rotation of the heavenly cycle, she rigorously observed the Orthodoxy of the  
30 Creator, so as not to perform anything contrary to nature; she did not allow passions to seize her, but did not avoid those places, where you are drawn down to the earth as if by cords. Descending low from (the greatest) height, and obedient to the commands of reason, she applied all her efforts to preserve the simplicity of her human nature in compliance with her inner constitution, without coupling her nature with any passion. If she desired something, it deserved to be desired, so that  
35 when she desired something it was a thing truly desirable. She was praised, and she deserved all kinds of praise; she was looked on as a happy woman, and she was happy. And there was no good in the entire world that did not find itself in her.

Those disobedient to her she belittled, but she raised up loyal subjects. She did not alienate her neighbors; she did not annex houses to her house, and lands to her land,<sup>94</sup> but contented herself  
40 with her family estates, so that others did not think her to be unjust and greedy. And as the highest

truth judges the righteous, she, too, exerted her influence upon her neighbors not through fear, but by personally protecting them from those who terrorized them, making them even frightening for their enemies. Ridding those around her of the insatiability peculiar to leeches, she never made fruits poisonous and deeds harmful.

She sat as a judge between neighboring kingdoms, making sure that nobody started a war or tried to coerce one another. And setting herself as an example for them, she was considered to be a second Solomon among kings. Whoever heard the name of the Queen began to long in his soul to see her; and if they were unable to do so, even great kings cursed their fates. She would have absorbed the whole sea, like a cloud that sprinkles its sweet rain equally upon everyone.

If someone among you goes again over the chronicles, narrating the lives of the kings of old or of the new, he will see that not one of them exceeded by his deeds those performed by Tamar, as we said in the beginning.

She expressed joy when she related something, she was bashful when teaching somebody; she gently entered into contact with everybody and instructed them calmly, she punished mercifully and scolded kindly, so as to show plainly the properties of God. She was a light for reasonable and unreasonable people, she shone for the first and burnt the second. She was a bridle for those who strayed from the straight and narrow and a spur for the careless, a moral law for the aged and an iron staff for youngsters; she was a wise protector for those walking upon the straight path, while impartially whipping the disobedient.

The teachers of scripture feared God, the priests kept order, the monks observed respectable activity, the *mtavaris* learned to live piously and keep to the straight and narrow; the people acquired a sense of duty to serve God and – with fidelity – their masters. The youths learned to despise narrow disbelief, so that there was no trace of a depraved immorality or youthful and obstinate disobedience in the days of Tamar. Moreover, no one used bad language, at least those who were honored to dwell in the royal chambers or to serve at the court.

In this way, observing God's laws in everything, she acquired God's grace, and God blessed her life and increased her fruitfulness. And as the Scripture says, "light falls on the righteous,"<sup>95</sup> and at dawn, her spouse is the afternoon joy; at dusk she peacefully passed away on her bed. The Lord adorned the days of her life with honor and her time with peace. During the time of her reign, her face had never expressed any doubt, because not one request of a widow or orphan or some oppressed one was left without satisfaction. She spent her days in joy, because every day she personally brought happiness to paupers and the sick. At last she departed to her fathers and joined them, leaving behind her two children, Giorgi and Rusudan. They were fine and beloved, such that everybody would like to have; they were praiseworthy, of regal appearance, reasonable, adorned with wisdom and filled with all kinds of virtues. During her 23 years on the throne, Tamar managed to realize a valorous reign in all its manifestations.

Here I close these words. Let the following generation find proper words for the description of other victories already achieved. We (for our part) respectfully and reverently fall silent.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> King of Georgia, Giorgi III (1156-1184), son of Demet're I (1125-1155) and father of Queen Tamar.
- <sup>2</sup> Koronik'on – a year (Greek ó χρόνος). One of the three calendars used in Ancient Georgia (I – the Jewish; II – the Christian; and III – Koronik'on). The system was based on a 532 year cycle – 28 is multiplied by the moon's cycle (19 years); alternation of the days of the week, months and years is repeated every 532<sup>nd</sup> year. In 780 the 12<sup>th</sup> cycle of this calendar was complete. The Georgian sources use this system for designation of the 12<sup>th</sup> (which began in 781) and the 14<sup>th</sup> (which began in 1313) cycles (K. K'ek'elidze, *Kartuli era da eortologiuri ts'elits'adi*, (*The Georgian Era and the Eortological Year*), Tbilisi: *Kartuli enis ist'oriis da mat'erialuri k'ult'uris inst'it'ut'is shromebi* (Proceedings of Institute of Language, History and Material Culture, Vols. 5-6, 1940).
- <sup>3</sup> Rusudan – sister of King Giorgi III, aunt of Queen Tamar. She was married to Giyas ad-Din Suleiman-shah, the Seljukid, who was the ruler of Western Iran and Iraq in 1160-1161. After becoming a widow she returned to her homeland and took an active part in the political life of the country. The question of Tamar's marriage was decided by her consent. At the age of 80 she took monastic vows (approximately in 1210).
- <sup>4</sup> The sultans of Shamiram. Rusudan (the Queen's aunt) "was sister-in-law of the great Shamiram sultans."
- <sup>5</sup> Rusudan – the sister of Queen Tamar. A second daughter of King Giorgi III.
- <sup>6</sup> There is disagreement over this phrase, and whether it concerns the aunt of Queen Tamar or her sister, Queen Rusudan.
- <sup>7</sup> This is a periphrasis of the biblical expression – "And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, long live King Solomon" (Kings 2:39). These words were said by people when the biblical King Solomon was anointed. The Georgian kings traced their origin to the biblical forefathers: Jesse, David and Solomon.
- <sup>8</sup> The throne of Vakht'ang – the throne kept its halo from the time of King Vakht'ang Gorgasali I (second half of the fifth century). The throne of David – the same throne, which in 1089-1125 was occupied by the powerful king, David the Restorer. It is also an image of the biblical throne of David (2 Kings 3:10).
- <sup>9</sup> "... first for the Moon..." – the images of the throne of David as well as of the Moon are suggested by the biblical psalms in the name of King Solomon (Psalm 71:5).
- <sup>10</sup> Sabaoth Elohim – two of a number of denominations for God in Judaism. In the Georgian original a distorted form "Saboetelio" is given.
- <sup>11</sup> Periphrasis of the biblical text (Psalm 71:8).
- <sup>12</sup> In the summer of 686, in Koronik'on 403 – here two systems of chronology (from the three used in Georgia) are used: "in the Hebrew year" (5502 BC) and of the "year 781," that is from the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> cycle of 532 year cycle. The chronology from the time of the creation of the world in Georgia was expressed, variously, by a number of years: 5500, 5508, 5504... In this case 5502 B.C. is used.
- <sup>13</sup> Nik'olaoz Gulaberisdze – Katholikos of Georgia (1150-1178). In 1178, declining the position of Katholikos, he went to Jerusalem, from where he was summoned by Queen Tamar. He was offered the position of Katholikos again, but he refused the offer. He died in about 1190. On him as a pastor and ecclesiastical writer, see K. K'ek'elidze, *dzveli kartuli lit'erat'uris ist'oria* (*The History of Ancient Georgian Literature*), Tbilisi: 1951, Vol. 1, pp. 298-303.
- <sup>14</sup> *Mts'ignobartukhutsesi* – the head of notaries, composer of documents. From the beginning of the twelfth century – the head of government, or chancellor, the first person after the king. From the time of David the Restorer this position was usually kept by the bishop of Ch'q'ondidi (the bishop's cathedral was in the village of Mart'vili, in Samegrelo), who united in his hands both ecclesiastical and secular powers; he was called *ch'q'ondidel-mts'ignobartukhutsesi*. From the end of the fifteenth century, the post lost its initial significance. For more details see N. A. Berdzenishvili, "kartuli savaziro peodalur sakartveloshi" ("The Institution of the Vizier in Feudal Georgia"), Tbilisi: Vol. 3, pp. 5-56, 1966.
- <sup>15</sup> *sp'asalar* – (from Pers. *Sip'akhsalar*) commander.
- <sup>16</sup> Yuri, the son of the great prince of Suzdal, Andreas Bogolubski (1110-1174). Andreas Bogolubski was killed in 1174. Yuri had found refuge with the Q'ipchaks; from there he was brought into Georgia and in 1185 became Tamar's husband. This marriage continued for two and a half years. Divorcing him, Tamar deported him to

Byzantine. Twice (in 1191 and 1193) Yuri attempted to retrieve the throne, but both times was defeated by Tamar. His fate is unknown. The historian does not mention his name, calling him just “the Russian.”

<sup>17</sup> Patriarch – a head of the church of Georgia; initially the head of the church was vested in the Katholikos, as in Armenia and Syria. From the beginning of the eleventh century the Katholikos of Georgia is also called Patriarch – thus “Katholikos-Patriarch” with an explicit assumption that he is the sixth, after the five Ecumenical Patriarchs, I. Javakhishvili, *kartuli samartlis ist'oria (The History of Georgian Law)*, Tbilisi: no. II, 1929, pp. 9-10.

<sup>18</sup> *didebuli* – a noble, who has acquired “dideba” or “greatness.” *Dideba* was a post granted by a king to a feudal subject. A domain was bound to the title, and the *didebuli* was granted right of immunity. *Didebulis* tried to transform the title and domains attached into hereditary property.

<sup>19</sup> *sp'asp'et* – (from Pers. “sepah” (army) and “pat” (head)) commander.

<sup>20</sup> *eristavi* – literally “head of people,” responsible for running a military detachment (*eristavi* became a family name in Georgian); also a post in the royal administration. See also *eristavt eristavi* – a post in the higher administration, or the ruler of a region.

<sup>21</sup> A biblical saying (Jeremiah 51:9).

<sup>22</sup> The phrase is based on the biblical saying: “And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband” (Corinthians 7:10).

<sup>23</sup> David – the second spouse of Queen Tamar. According to the text of our historian, David “was the son of Ossetian kings.” In the *History and Eulogy of Monarchs*, the following is said about him: “There was a knight in the palace of Queen Rusudan, one of the sons of Ephraim, that is Ovses, people brave and powerful in battles” *Istoriia i voskhvalenie ventsenostsev (History and Eulogy of Monarchs) (kartlis tskhovreba)*, trans. K. K'ek'elidze, Tbilisi: 2008, p. 263). The dynasty of Ossetian Bagrat'ionis, as opposed to the Georgian Bagrat'ionis (the Davidids), were called the Ephraimids, that is, the descendants of the biblical personage Ephraim. See K. K'ek'elidze, “kartuli politik'uri azrovnebis erti momenti” (“One Instant of Georgian Political Thought”), in *dzveli kartuli lit'erat'uris ist'oria (History of Ancient Georgian Literature)*, Tbilisi: 1956, Vol. I, pp. 312-318. The chronicler of the period of Lasha Giorgi, indicates that “David, Tamar's husband, was the King of the Ossetians from the Bagrat'ioni family” (*kartlis tskhovreba*, S.Q'aukhchishvili (ed.), Vol. I, p.369). The Ossetian Bagrat'ionis came from the stepbrother of Bagrat' IV, Demet're, whose mother, Queen Alde, was a daughter of an Ossetian king. In the middle of the eleventh century David, the son of Demet're, ran away to the homeland of his grandmother. He became a founder of the family of the Ossetian Bagrat'ionis. David Soslan was his great grandson. David Soslan was brought up by Queen Rusudan. His marriage with Tamar took place in 1188, and one year after that event David “excelled everybody in archery, horsemanship, gymnastics on the ring, swimming and book learning, and, as it can be seen even now, in all this he surpassed everybody...” (*The History and Eulogy of Monarchs*).

<sup>24</sup> Samtavrisi – a bishopric and cathedral in the gorge of the river Rekhula; the bishop, who occupied this cathedral bore the rank of *samtavneli* and was a pastor of the valleys of Ksani and Rekhuli.

<sup>25</sup> *Amirsp'asalar* – a supreme commander; the name comes from the Arabian “amir” (commander over a military formation of 1000 people) and the Persian *sipakhsalar* (commander). The “head of the army” is mentioned for the first time in the sources during Giorgi III's reign. According to “The Royal Court Order,” *amirsp'asalar* was an honorable vizier and a head of the army” (See I. A. Javakhishvili, *kartuli samartlis ist'oria (The History of Georgian Law)*, Tbilisi: 1928, Vol. II, no. I, pp. 161-165).

<sup>26</sup> *Msakhurtukhutsesi* – a vizier, in charge of the palace and its finances. “Within his province was the supervision of the treasury, the bedchamber, the head of bed keepers, the head of treasurers etc.” (The Royal Court Order, #14) (For more detail, see I. A. Javakhishvili, *kartuli samartlis ist'oria (The History of Georgian Law)*, *op.cit.*, pp. 183-190).

<sup>27</sup> The faith of the Armenians... – here the Christianity professed by the Armenian Church. The Armenian Church split from the Eastern Church after the Chalcedonian Council (451) and is now often called Gregorian after Gregory the Illuminator (he preached Christianity in Armenia at the beginning of the fourth century).

<sup>28</sup> Mandat'urtukhutsesi – the vizier of the Georgian court, Master of Ceremonies, corresponds to a Minister for Internal Affairs (See I. A. Javakhishvili, *kartuli samartlis ist'oria (The History of Georgian Law)*, *op.cit.*, pp. 157-167.

<sup>29</sup> Maragha – the town of Maraga in Iranian Azerbaijan.

- <sup>30</sup> The biblical personages who bear children late in age. Manoa, whose wife was infertile had an angel appear before her who “told her: Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son” (Judges 13:3). Elisabeth, the wife of the priest Zachariah, was also sterile. An angel appeared before Zachariah and “said unto him, fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John” (Luke 1:13); Hannah, the wife of Elkanah, had no children for a long time, but “the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bore three sons and two daughters” (1 Samuel 2:21).
- <sup>31</sup> Persia in this case has a rather wide meaning and means the countries peopled by Muslims.
- <sup>32</sup> Romgur (Remjad, Ramjar) – one of the quarters of the town of Nishapur. The Georgian sources of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries implied Khurasan, the central province of Iran (See V. N. Gabashvili, *matsne*, History Series, 1971, no. 4, pp.124-130).
- <sup>33</sup> Adarbadagan – Azerbaijan.
- <sup>34</sup> Ch’q’ondideli – literally “From Ch’q’ondidi;” the bishop of Mart’vili was Ch’q’ondideli, who from the twelfth century had the powers of the first vizier.
- <sup>35</sup> Somkhiti – a part of Lower Kartli; in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the territory of Lower Kartli was located to the south of Trialeti Ridge down to the mountains of Bambak’i (in the south), and from the river of Debeda (in the east) to Javakheti (in the west).
- <sup>36</sup> Here the author gives examples of heroism and resourcefulness of small armies, which defeated superior forces (Judges 7:16; 2 Chronicles 32:21).
- <sup>37</sup> Here, the victory of the Georgian Army in the battle of Shamkhor.
- <sup>38</sup> The battle of Shamkhor – a battle between the Georgian army and the army of Atabek Abu Bekir. The Shirvanshah and Amirmiran fought on the Georgian side. According to P. D. Jordania, the battle took place on 1 June 1195 (Kronikebi (*Chronicles*), Tiflis: 1892, Vol. 1, p. 282; see also I. A. Javakhishvili, *kartveli eris ist’oria* (*The History of Georgian People*), *shromebi* (*Works*), Tbilisi: 1983, Vol. 2, p. 270). In one of the Armenian chronicles of the eighth century the year 1194 is stated, but we must keep in mind that in such chronicles we often have to deal with errors of 1-2 years (A. P. Abdaladze, “shamkhoris brdzolis datarighebisatvis” (“On the date of the Battle of Shamkhor”), *matsne*, History Series, 1973, no. I. There exists additional material favoring 1195 (R. K’ik’nadze, *Ocherki po istochnikovedeniiu istorii Gruzii* (*Essays on the Source for the Study of Georgian History*), Tbilisi: 1980, pp. 138-139).
- <sup>39</sup> In the Georgian text they are called “Avrian” – *amirs*. M. Brosset preserved the original reading in his French translation.
- <sup>40</sup> Bubakar – Abu Bekr in the Georgian text, the Atabek of Adarbadagan from the Ildegizid dynasty, son of Jakhan Pahlavan, nephew of Kizil-Arslan. Atabek Kizil-Arslan (1186-1191) proclaimed himself Sultan, but shortly after was killed; his domains were divided between his nephews. However, after gaining victory over his brothers Abu Bekr seized their territories. After his defeat in the battle of Shamkhor, he retreated first to Nakhichevan and then to Tabriz. See *sakartvelos ist’oriis nark’vevebi* (*Essays of the History of Georgia*), *op.cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 321-325).
- <sup>41</sup> *Panjanobat* – a Persian word, consists of two parts: “panj” – five, and “nobat” – music with drum beating and trumpet blowing, performed at the court of a Shah or a noble. “Nobat” was performed on particularly solemn occasions; in our source “nobat” is preceded by the word “panj” (five), so it is clear that in this case “nobat” was performed five times. The expression “the Sultan’s *panjanobat* was performed” points to an event in honor of David Soslan, who sat on the throne of the Sultan in Ganja. “Nobat” was performed five times (G. G. Alasania, “tamaris meore ist’orik’osis ori t’erminis ganmartebisatvis” (“On the Interpretation of Two Terms in the Work of the Second Historian of Tamar”), *Eastern Philology*, Tbilisi: 1973, Vol. 3, pp. 205-208).
- <sup>42</sup> Mirmiran in the Georgian source – *Amir Miran*, the nephew of Kizil-Arslan, the son of Jakhan Pahlavan, according to the Georgian sources the holder of Arran and Gelakun. Driven off from his domains by his brother Abu Bekr, he found a shelter with Shirvanshah Akhsitan, whose daughter he then married. But Abu-Bekr did not give them a moment’s peace, so Mirmiran had to ask for help from Queen Tamar. In the battle of Shamkhor, Mirmiran fought on the side of the Georgians. King David gave Ganja to Mirmiran as a vassal of Georgia. But Mirmiran was soon murdered by Abu-Bekr’s assassins. On Mirmiran, see R. K’ik’nadze *Ocherki po istochnikovedeniiu istorii Gruzii*, *op.cit.*, pp. 132-139.

- <sup>43</sup> "... distinguished people..." – in the Georgian text before these words is the word "ermiontasa." V. Dondua supposed that "ermion," the word used by the author as an epithet to characterize Zachariah and Ivane Mkhargrdzeli, comes, probably, from Hermion, the name of the German King who was deified after his death (V. Dondua, *"ermionis" mnishvneloba tamar mepis epok'ashi (On the Meaning of "Ermion" in the Time of Queen Tamar)*, Tbilisi: 1973, II, p. 142). For T. Q'aukhchishvili such an explanation is unlikely (T. Q'aukhchishvili, "ant'ik'uri samq'aro rustavelis epok'is ist'oriografiashi: tamar mepis ist'otorik'osebi" ("The Antic World in the Historiography of the Epoch of Rustaveli: The Historians of Queen Tamar"), *matsne*, History Series, 1974, no. 3, p.113).
- <sup>44</sup> Gulist'an – a fortress on the left bank of the river of Aksu, to the west of Shemakha. According to the text of *The Life of the Queen of Queens Tamar*, the state of Georgia with all its subject countries stretched from Anak'opia (in the west) to the fortress of Gulist'an (in the east).
- <sup>45</sup> "Estates" in the Georgian text are represented by the word "sepeni." In this case "sepe" is used in the sense of "estates," "lands."
- <sup>46</sup> *monap'ireni* – pl. *monap'ire* – the ruler of a border principality.
- <sup>47</sup> Dzorak'ert' – the same as Kurdvach'riskhevi, one of the tributaries of the river of Debeda; originates in the mountains of Irjani (contemporary Karagaja), flows from the west to the east and joins the Debeda River.
- <sup>48</sup> "...in the upper and lower regions..." – in Georgian sources "zemo" and "kvemo" (upper and lower) designate the upper and lower parts of the river. They also designate the territories of Kartli located up- and downstream of the river Mt'k'vari. "Zemo" (upper) is often used in the sense of Zemo Kartli (that is, the part of Kartli situated upstream of the Mt'k'vari – from the village of T'ashisk'ari to the head of the river). "Kvemo" (lower), on the other hand, designates Kvemo Kartli (that is, the territory of Kartli that lays south and downstream of the Mt'k'vari).
- <sup>49</sup> "Still higher – Art'aani" – the term "zedat" in the Georgian text is translated, which indicates that Art'aani is situated still higher than Javakheti. Art'aani – a province and a town situated upstream of the Mt'k'vari River. Art'aani is now called Ardahan (in Turkey).
- <sup>50</sup> Barda, Berda – Georgian Bardavi, the ancient town of Partav. The ruins are located close to the village of Evlakh (Azerbaijan).
- <sup>51</sup> In the Georgian text we have the word "darbaziseri," which in this case designates the permanently stationed palace troops.
- <sup>52</sup> The Sultan of Rumi – in the Georgian text – the Sultan of Greece. Greece in this case corresponds to the sultanate of Rumi or Iconium – a possession of the Seljukids in Anatolia. The capital of this sultanate was Iconium (Konya).
- <sup>53</sup> Nukardin – Sultan of Rumi, Rukn ad-Din Suleiman II (1196-1204). At the end of his rule his sons divided his domain between themselves (K. E. Bosworth, *Musulmanskie dinastii (Muslim Dynasties)*, Moscow: 1971, p. 178). He headed the coalition of the Seljuks in the battle of Basiani, but suffered a bitter defeat. Wounded in the battle he retreated to Erzurum. He died in 1204 (Ibn al-Asir et al., *op. cit.*).
- <sup>54</sup> Here the places are listed from where Rukn ad-Din gathered his army: K'alonero – a territory in Asia Minor (Alaya); Galat'ia – a region in the central part of Rumi (Iconic) Sultanate; Ghangra – Gangri – a fortress on the left tributary of the river Galis in Paphlagonia, possessions of the Danishmendids; Ankiria – Ankira (Angora) – a fortress on the territory of the Rumi Sultanate, in the place of contemporary Ankara; Isavria – a territory in Asia Minor, on Tavr, between Lykaonia and Kilikia; Cappadocia – a region in Asia Minor, in the south of Rumi Sultanate, Viphinia – a territory in the south of Asia Minor, situated to the west of Paphlagonia; Paphlagonia – a region in the north of Asia Minor, on the left bank of the lower reaches of the river Galis.
- <sup>55</sup> Uj – "watch" and frontier posts of the Turks. For a long time, it was thought that "uj" meant one of the Turkish tribes, a mistake committed by S. Guar (who translated *Abulphid*). But the Georgian historian, the author of *The Life of Queen of Queens Tamar*, implies the "Turks." (VI. Gordlevskii, *Gosudarstvo Seljukidov Maloi Azii (The State of Seljukids in Asia Minor)*, Moscow-Leningrad (M-L): 1941, pp. 22, 46). The Turks who lived in bordering regions were called Ujs. Usually the Oguz tribes lived at the borders; they were allegedly the bravest among the Turks and excellent warriors. Our historian indicates this: "... [they] were brave in the battle and numerous in number..." G. G. Alasania, "tamaris meore ist'orik'osis ori t'erminis ganmartebisatvis", *Vostochnaia filologia*, Vol. 2, pp. 209-210.

- <sup>56</sup> K'arnukalaki – Georgian name of the city of Erzurum. Erzurum (Arzan-ar-rum) was founded after the destruction (1049) by the Turks of the town of Arzan (Artsi in Armenian) in the upper reaches of the Tigris River, in the place of the ancient Theodosiopolis, which later they called Arzan of Rumi, that is of Byzantium. In the twelfth century it became the capital of an Emirate. In the thirteenth century the Sultan of Rumi, Rukn-ad-Din, deprived the ruler of this city (Ala ad-Din Saltuk-oglu, Saldukh, in Georgian) of power and appointed his brother Mogis ad-Din Togril-Shah as Emir of Erzurum. After the battle of Basiani, Erzurum fell into the sphere of influence of the state of Georgia.
- <sup>57</sup> Here Rukn ad-Din's brother, Mogis ad-Din Togril-Shah.
- <sup>58</sup> Senakerem (Sennakherim) – an Assyrian king (705-681).
- <sup>59</sup> Sevast'ia – a town in Asia Minor, in the upper reaches of the river Galis.
- <sup>60</sup> K'ari – the city of Kars (on the river of Akhurjan).
- <sup>61</sup> These two lines belong to the author of *The History and Eulogy of Monarchs*. I. A. Javakhishvili included them in the text of the second historian of Queen Tamar to make the content clearer.
- <sup>62</sup> Manager of the king's court – the literal translation of the Georgian term *ezosmodzghvari* used in the text. This term is met rarely in Georgian sources. It was used for the first time in the most ancient editions of *Four Chapters*. Later this term is encountered in *The Great Nomocanon* (translated in the eleventh century) for an official who, together with the bishop, is in charge of the church's treasury (See *didi nomokanoni* (*The Great Nomocanon*), Tbilisi: 1975, pp. 274-275). According to Vakhushti Bagrat'ioni, the *ezosmodzghvari* was in charge of the king's affairs, took care of receptions, the king's cuisine etc., and corresponded to the "nazir" of his time (V. Bagrat'ioni, *aghts'era sameposa sakartveloshi* (*Description of the Kingdom of Georgia*), Tbilisi: 1941, pp. 16, 21). The same explanation of this term is given in the Dictionary of S. S. Orbeliani (*naziri* – is a foreign word, in Georgian – *ezosmodzghvari*). In the opinion of I. P. Antelava, *ezosmodzghvari* corresponds to the position of *ganmgetukhutsesi* (master of ceremonies of a king's court), which is in the "Regulations of the King's Court" (fourteenth century) (I. P. Antelava, *ts'entraluri da adgilobrivi administ'ratsia XI-XIII sauk'uneebis sakartveloshi* (*Central and Local Administration of Georgia in the 11-13<sup>th</sup> cc.*), Tbilisi: 1983, p. 72).
- <sup>63</sup> Basiani – a region in the upper reaches of the Araxes River.
- <sup>64</sup> Battle of Basiani – the battle between the united armies of the Seljuks and the state of Georgia. The Seljuks were headed by Rukn-ad-Din. The battle took place in a valley in the region of Basiani and ended with the victory of the Georgian Army. This event is dated variously: according to the eastern sources it took place in 1202. M. Brosset proposed 1203 (*Uchenie zapiski imperatorskoi Akademii nauk* (*The Scientific Notes of the Imperial Academy of Sciences*) SPb.: 1904, V. II, ed. 5, p. 727). P. Jordania dated this battle as 1202 (Jordania, *op. cit.*, p. 291). 1205 and 1206 became widely accepted in Georgian historiography (see I. A. Javakhishvili, *kartveli eris ist'oria* (*The History of Georgian People*), *op.cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 277; N. A. Berdzenishvili, *sakartvelos ist'oriis sak'it'hebi* (*Questions on the History of Georgia*) Tbilisi: 1973, Vol. 6, p. 83. Several works were dedicated to a more precise definition of the date of the battle of Basiani (see for instance, A. G. Gamkrelidze, "Data Basianskogo Srazhenia i Nekotorie Voprosi Osnovaniia Trapezuntskoi Imperii" ("The Date of the Battle of Basiani and Some Questions on the Foundation of the Empire of Trabzon") in *Voprosi istorii narodov Kavkaza* (*Questions on the History of the Peoples of the Caucasus*), Tbilisi: 1966; B. G. Silagadze, *rustavelis epok'is sakartvelos ist'oriis zogierti sak'it'hebi* (*Some Questions on the History of Georgia in the Age of Rustaveli*), Tbilisi: 1958 pp. 119-120; R. K. K'ik'nadze, *Ocherki po istochnikovedeniu istorii Gruzii*, *op.cit.*, pp.148-149). At present the battle of Basiani is dated as 27 June 1202 (G. G. Alasania "basianis brdzolis datarigebisatvis" ("On the Date of the Battle of Basiani"), *matsne* History Series, 1975, no.1
- <sup>65</sup> An excerpt from the tenth verse of the 110<sup>th</sup> psalm of David.
- <sup>66</sup> Guzan – a powerful feudal lord from Southern Georgia; he rebelled twice against the Queen, for which he was punished by David by the gouging out his eyes.
- <sup>67</sup> K'ola – an area in the upper reaches of the Mt'k'vari River.
- <sup>68</sup> Lubia – Libya.
- <sup>69</sup> Sinai Mountain – situated in the Sinai Peninsula, in its extreme western part; there were several Georgian monasteries and churches on the mountain, including a Georgian Church, founded in the tenth century, the cloister of Moses, and the church of Moses at Alias.

- 70 "The Holy Mountain" Athos, in the Balkan Peninsula.
- 71 P'et'rits'oni – a monastery in Bulgaria, in the village of Bachkovo, founded in 1083 by Grigol Bakuriani.
- 72 Romana – a district of Constantinople, in which the monastery of Roman was located, founded by the Georgians in the tenth century.
- 73 K'uruseti – the city of Kurus in Syria.
- 74 The Black Mountain – a mountain and monastery (founded by the Georgians in the tenth century) close to Antioch in Syria.
- 75 Alexius Angar – Byzantine Emperor Alexius III Angel (1195-1203), notorious for his cruelty and stinginess. In the Georgian source the wrong form "Angar" is used in place of "Angel." On the basis of the traits of his character, the Georgians apparently detected a certain meaning in this name (in Georgian the word "angari" means a mercenary-minded person). Taking away the throne from his brother Isaac in 1195, Alexis blinded him. In 1203, when the crusaders occupied Constantinople, Alexis left the metropolis while the crusaders restored his brother Emperor Isaac, to the throne, as well as his son Alexis IV. In 1204 Alexis V Duka became emperor, and the former emperor began intriguing in order to regain the throne. He began actions against his son-in-law, the King of Nicaea Laskar. But Laskar won the struggle. In 1210 the old emperor was brought to Nicaea and made a monk in the monastery of Hyacinth, where he ended his life in 1211. T. I. Uspenski, *Istoriia Vizantiiskoi Imperii (The History of the Byzantine Empire)*, Moscow-Leningrad: 1948, Vol. 3, pp. 548-549).
- 76 "...army from Western Georgia..." – here in the Georgian text the term "over Likhi" is used, to mean the Likhi Ridge, which stretched north to south and divided Georgia into Western and Eastern parts.
- 77 Lazika – Lazia in the Georgian text; here is meant Ch'aneti (on the southern shore of the Black Sea), on the territory of which the Trabzon Empire was founded.
- 78 Here some points of the Trabzon Empire are listed: Limon – the fortress of Limnia on the Black Sea shore of Asia Minor; Samison – Samsun in Asia Minor, on the Black Sea, the ancient city of Amis; Sinop' – a seaport on the Black Sea shore of Asia Minor; Kerasunt – a town in Asia Minor, on the Black Sea, between Trabzon and Samsun; K'it'ora – a town in Asia Minor, on the Black Sea shore, to the west of Trabzon; Amast'ria – a town in Asia Minor, on the Black Sea shore, to the east of Sinop'; Arak'lia – the town of Iraklion in Asia Minor, on the Black Sea shore, to the west of Amast'ria.
- 79 Calling Alexius Comnenus, the first emperor of Trabzon, Queen Tamar's relative, the second historian of Tamar probably means the following: David the Restorer's daughter K'ata was married to one of the representatives of the Comnenus House.
- 80 Here, the first emperor of the Trabzon Empire Alexius Comnenus. Our historian thinks him to be the son of Andronicus Comnenus. However, Alexius was not the son but the grandson of Andronicus (on this historical mistake see the article of A. G. Gamq'relidze, *basianis brdzolis datarigebisatvis (The Date of the Basiani Battle)*, Tbilisi: 1966, p. 251). Andronicus had two sons – Manuel and John. Manuel's children – Alexius and David – lived at the court of Queen Tamar. This Alexius later became the Emperor of the Trabzon Empire.
- 81 Andronicus – the grandfather of the emperor of Trabzon Alexius Comnenus; the son of Isaac Sebastokrator, the grandson of Emperor Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118). During the time of Giorgi III, when his uncle, Manuel I (1142-1180), reigned in Byzantium, he visited Georgia with his family and took part in some battles for the King of Georgia. In 1182 he became the emperor Andronicus I. In 1185 he was dethroned and murdered. His older son Manuel was also killed, and his children Alexius and David came to Georgia and Queen Tamar. Later, Alexius became Emperor of Trabzon (T. I. Uspenski, *Istoriia Vizantiiskoi imperii, op.cit.*, p. 221).
- 82 Franks – the Georgian sources usually call Franks the inhabitants of Western Europe in general (in this case – the crusaders).
- 83 In the Georgian text – Borgaleti.
- 84 "...in the twenty third or twenty fourth year..." – according to Ibn al-Asir, Kars was joined to the state of Georgia in 1206-1207. The Armenian historian Vardan dates this as 1206. These dates are confirmed by the testimony of the second historian of Tamar: The 23<sup>rd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> year of Queen Tamar's reign falls on 1206 or 1207.
- 85 "...including in the precincts..." – in order to rule non-Georgian regions. Two forms of inclusion into the Georgian state were used: direct annexation (inclusion into the crown lands) and feudal-vassal dependence. Feudal-vassal

dependence is expressed by the word “giving” (“gantsema”), and direct annexation – by the words “inclusion into the precincts of the kingdom” (“samepod dach’era”).

<sup>86</sup> Rakhs – the Araxes river.

<sup>87</sup> Sp’eri – a region in the upper reaches of the Ch’orokhi River.

<sup>88</sup> “...only in 17 years...” – the annexation of the town of K’ari took place in 1206-1207. It is not clear, what the author means by this phrase, what had happened “in seventeen years” preceding this event. P. Jordania thought that the author meant the years King David Soslan spent on the throne in the kingdom of Georgia (1189+17=1206) (Jordania, *op. cit.*, p. 196). I. A. Javakhishvili supposed that in the text the designation of tens was lacking – in place of “atchvidmeti” (seventeen) there should be “(otsda)chvidmetsa” or thirty seven. The number thirty seven designates the whole life of Queen Tamar, from her birth until the seizure of the town of K’ari in 1207 (1170+37=1207).

<sup>89</sup> Upper lands (in Georgian “aghamarti”) is used in the sense of “southern lands,” and the “upper and lower regions,” if it is about the “foreign affairs” of the Queen, in our opinion means the regions of Ani and Dvin.

<sup>90</sup> “And again, they brought her here into the fortress of Agari” – the fortress of Agari was a large fort and the residence of kings. As N. A. Berdzenishvili established, the fortress of Agari in the ancient sources is the contemporary K’ojori Fortress. This fortress was erected on a mountain slope situated to the south of Tbilisi; this was a summer residence of the Georgian kings. It was also surrounded by woody mountains (in Georgian “daso”), where the King spent the summer with his court. Queen Tamar died in this fortress. From the fifteenth century the fortress of Agari was called the K’ojori Fortress (N. A. Berdzenishvili, “dzveli tbilisi t’op’onik’isatvis” (“On the Toponymy of Ancient Tbilisi”), in B. Silagadze, *Nekotorie Voprosi Istorii Gruzii (Some Questions of the History of Georgia) op.cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 301-331).

<sup>91</sup> “General powerlessness (impotence)...” – with these words begins the so-called “Afterword” or the “concluding part” – a disputed section of the text. Some think that this is the end of *The History and Eulogy of Monarchs* (I. A. Lolashvili), others believe that this passage belongs to the text of *The Life of Queen of Queens Tamar* (I. A. Javakhishvili); still others suppose that this is the end of some third description of the life of Queen Tamar, which did not reach us (K. Grigolia).

<sup>92</sup> *mtavaris* – sovereign princes.

<sup>93</sup> Kashags – a north Caucasian tribe.

<sup>94</sup> Here in negative form is the eighth verse of the fifth chapter of the book of the Prophet Isaiah: “Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!” (Isaiah 5:8).

<sup>95</sup> An excerpt from the eleventh verse of Psalm 96 of David.

## THE HUNDRED YEARS' CHRONICLE

1. She, the beloved one, still in her lifetime, crowned her son, Giorgi, who was also called Lasha. He was thirteen when he received the crown, and Queen Tamar gave him her blessing. When Tamar passed away, he was eighteen years of age. She had left to her son her kingdom. Grief and sorrow, and the sounds of moaning, and mourning was among the Georgian people – as if they had been sucked alive into hell. Alas, such was their lot.

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After Tamar, the kingdom was inherited by her son – Lasha Giorgi – who had a powerful frame, was a daring archer, loved feasting, and was brave. He had a rather special nature. The main reason for his ascendancy was that all the adversaries of his virtuous and godly mother submitted to him; she left him a tranquil and peaceful kingdom, and all the peoples paid tribute to him, like the Ganjians and their neighbors, the Nakhchevanians, and the inhabitants of K'arnukalaki, and many others, who came to him with gifts and tribute. He rejoiced at all this and joy reigned everywhere

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But then the Ganjians began to break away, and stopped bringing tribute to the King. Learning of this, King Lasha called on his people and gathered the whole Georgian army, Imiers and Amiers, and Ivane Mkhargrdzeli, to whom his mother Tamar honored with the position of *atabag*. This position became prominent so that the person occupying it was respected even more than certain *eristavis*. Mkhargrdzeli was a vizier of the King's court. The King said: "My mother, the most brilliant among the Kings and the blessed one, entrusted me with this kingdom, making all the adversaries of my fathers and forefathers her tributaries, and they remained subject to our power. But now the *atabag* of Ganja behaves inadmissibly, refusing to pay us tribute. I have decided therefore to respond to Ganja with vengeance and to charge you with this task. With your might and assistance, my blessed fathers and forefathers demolished the powers of the great sultans. Now accept our honor and gifts and let's take up arms against Ganja so as to avoid the outrage of our other enemies. With God's assistance, guided by the Precious Cross and your valor, we will overcome our foe."

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The nobles rejoiced at hearing these words of the King and told him: "The great comfort God granted us has been increased, for we have found a valorous Goliath in you, comparable to Gorgasal or David. Trusting in God and your might, we shall conquer all the unruly in your kingdom and make them repent for their disobedience." They approved a campaign and the King in person with an ample army set out to ravage Ganja. The Ganjians were unable to offer resistance and the lands of Ganja were devastated, many captives and much spoil was taken. The army approached the town of Ganja, surrounded it and fought for many days; and day after day fighters came in groups out

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of the gate of the fortress to engage in battle with the soldiers enforcing the siege; chosen soldiers specially selected fought on both sides.

2. Then the King decided to skirt the town with a small squad. While he was surrounding the city from the plain alongside the river Mt'k'vari, the inhabitants of Ganja discovered his design and prepared for the attack, heavily arming themselves. There were about ten thousand well-armed men. And the King had roughly four thousand soldiers with him, most of whom were Meskhis; the people of Mkhargrdzeli, the Er-K'akhs and Somkhitis,<sup>1</sup> the Kartlians and Torelians, all were in separate groups. The Abkhazians and the Dadian-Bedianians were in mutual accord with the Likhians-from-the-other-side.

Seeing that the King was close, the Ganjians opened the gate and fell upon him like wild beasts. King Lasha looked at this multitude, having no fear in his heart, and turning to his people he found reassurance, for they were ready to give their lives for the King and told him: "Let us perish in this deadly feat, but we will not put you to shame in the very first battle of your reign." And they rushed forward and engaged the enemy, and a battle, daring and savage, took place. Most of the Ganjians found death from Georgian swords. King Lasha himself rushed bravely and mightily forward – the Goliath, lucky with arms, and strong of hand. Side by side with him in the vanguard fought the son of Q'uarq'uare Jaq'eli – Bibila Gurk'eli, Botso, son of Botso and the brother of Memna, for they were placed at the head of the military host. As soon as the Ganjians saw their courage, they took flight with all the speed they were capable of. They were pursued up to the very gates of Ganja. Only a few of them managed to reach the town, most of them being taken captive, and some were slain.

The women witnessing this, struck a desperately at their breasts, tore off their scarves along with their hair, and intensified their yelling and moaning. Hearing this noise, the soldiers and the distinguished noblemen besieging (the town) approached the King and told him of the decision of the troops and their commanders that he had to forbear from fighting like an ordinary soldier. Approaching the gates of the fortress, the King, protected by God, dismounted and asked for pardon for his actions, which stemmed from ignorance. Then he returned to his camp happily, and for the whole week there was joy, and gifts were given to the troops.

The *atabag* of Ganja, falling into such desperate situation, begged the King to restore the *kharaġ*. Hearing this, the King gave him back the captives, with all kinds of riches and many gifts, precious stones and pearls, gold and silver.

The King came to Tbilisi and filled Georgia with his gifts, for he was more generous than any other King in the world. He bore no envy, was a devout man, he fasted, was law-giving and merciful. However later he showed an inclination for evil things, falling under the influence of immoral people. And as has been written of Solomon, who was perverted by his wives in a similar way, immoral people did the same with our King, which can be seen from the following. He indulged in feasting with drunkards, and he inclined more and more to evil, and as it is said of Israelites: "And he set people about eating and drinking and they started to dance."

Drunken marrymaking and immoderate gluttony deranged him more than any vice; he rejected the viziers of the blessed Queen and the instructors of the King in matters of propriety. He surrounded himself with his drunken peers and dissolute women, and he reached such a degree of disgrace

that wine-lovers arriving in Tbilisi invited the King to drink with them to satiate their abominations along with those of the King. One time, some drunken sots not suspecting he was the King, under the influence of excessive wine and mead, fell upon him and beat him so hard that he lost the sight of his right eye.

3. Learning of this, the Georgian nobles were angry; and most of all *atabag* Ivane and Varam of Gaga, Zachariah's son, who stopped attending the court, and grumbled: "We cannot bear this reign of yours until you stop sharing company with such evil people who follow such dissolute paths." The King repented and made a firm vow to do nothing henceforward without their counsel. And though he kept his promise, the invisible enemy grew stronger; they could not persuade him to get married, as it would have meant tempering the fire of his passion towards women. Coming to Velistsikhe, one of the villages of K'akheti, he beheld a woman of fine appearance and at once became a prisoner to his passion. Forgetting the story of David and the wife of Uria, he brought her in haste to himself and made fervent love to her. She became pregnant and gave birth to a boy, who was named David. This is the very David who later, after overcoming many great ordeals, became King, which will be seen later. In order to educate the boy, the King entrusted him to his sister Rusudan, who was the only-begotten daughter of Tamar. There was an affection between them which surpassed the love which (generally) takes place between brothers and sisters.

So the King lived in an orderly and peaceful manner, and his vassals from everywhere furnished his court with gifts and tributes. With joy on their lips, people came to his kingdom to perform worthy deeds. He descended to Ajameti, hunted in Tskhumi and Abkhazia, and settled affairs there. At the time of the grape harvest, he came to Tbilisi, and spent winters at the Armenian Gate, fighting battles with the Ganjians from there. In the summer he ascended the upper reaches of the Mt'k'vari and stopped in K'ola, where tributaries from Khlata and Greece came to him with gifts.

Living so carefree a life, he had no desire to get married. The catholicoses, bishops and viziers gathered and concluded: "It does not befit you to keep a concubine by your side, and no spouse; embodying the word of Christ, apostle Paul writes: "Marriage is sacred and the marital bed – pure. But adultery and adulterers are condemned by the Lord." However the King would not listen to them. They removed the woman, David's mother, and sent her back to her husband. Even after that he would not get married, and remained single. Lasha was brave, well-built, manly, audacious, arrogant, selfish, willful, and as I have already said, generous; but he was also a hypocrite, fond of drinking and a glutton. And while there was peace in his Kingdom, he loved wining and dining. The Fathers write: "There are three causes of passions from which all evil things proceed: gluttony, greed for money and vanity. Their antecedents are: lechery, adultery, spite, over-sensitivity, and pride. From these evils comes lust and indulgence of an unlawful passion, which we have no time to describe separately here. As the Prophet says: "Jacob ate, became satiated and fat, and forsook the Lord, his creator; he broke from God, his savior."

The same thing happened to the Georgian people, for satiating themselves, they indulged in pleasure; reckless people who did not deserve to stay at the King's court, gave themselves up to adultery and drinking; they remain there even now. All this became burdensome for both the catholicoses and the nobles of his kingdom, and above all for *atabag* Ivane. Unwilling to remain

amongst such people, they withdrew from the King, isolating themselves in their own estates. That was the cause of the increase of sins and the devastation of Georgia, which the following words bear witness to.

### **The Story of Genghis-Khan or how he Appeared in the Eastern Land**

5        4. There in the Sunny Land called Chin-Machin, which is in the East, are people from an amazing place, called Q'araq'urum. They are strange by face, and in their mores and appearance. You cannot find stories about them in any of the ancient books, for they are alien in their language, habits and their way of life; they did not know the taste of bread, while they ate the meat and drank the milk of horses. And they were perfect in their bodies, stout, but strong on their feet, beautiful and of fair  
10 complexion, with narrow brown eyes, elongated and bright; they were big-headed, with thick dark hair, flat-foreheads, and the noses so low that the cheeks rose above them in a way that only small nostrils were visible; they had small lips, regular white teeth and no beards at all. So uncommon were they in appearance. But nobody should wonder, all of them – the men as well as the women – possessed a kind of amazing beauty. They were also brave by nature and chosen archers, shooting  
15 perfectly the heavy arrows from their tight bows, which no armor could protect you from. They were especially skillful in handling horses, for they were brought up on horseback, and knew nothing of armor, using only bows and arrows.

So wonderful were those people that looking at them you might think them crazy. Though all kinds of wisdom resided amongst them, and they were in full possession of reason and self-control.  
20 There was no place for lies among them; they were servile in the face of no man, neither great, nor small, or even before a council; they submitted to the good order created by Genghis-Khan, though to tell of everything in detail would be a long story.

By tradition, they believed in and worshipped a single and immortal God. They turned their faces towards the East, kneeled three times, bowed three times, touched the palm with the tip of the long  
25 finger, snapped it, and did nothing more.

The Uighurs, on the other hand, were votaries of an idol which they called Kunjit. They have a script with few letters, for they write books with only sixteen letters, which are simple to study and easy to understand. They also have twelve years, in the manner of the *kronik'on* (cycle), with the names of dumb animals at the head of each year. This is like in ancient times, when the sage  
30 Hellenes created twelve zodiacs, which are stars and constellations of the Sun and the Moon, and for each of these constellations they set aside thirty bright days, and not animals but signs (of the zodiac). The Uighurs also placed one animal at the head of each year and upon expiration of twelve years, they start the cycle anew. Reaching the twelfth year, they began again to count years, which they called: Q'alghunjil, Ukurjil, Parsinjil, Tavlainjil, Luiljil, Moghiljil, Morinjil, Q'onijil, Mechinjil,  
35 Taghanjil, Nokhinjil, Q'aq'injil.

Such were the names of the twelve animals, each of which was privileged to head a year. The first of them was called Q'alghun, that is the Mouse, then came the Cow, the Leopard, the Rabbit, the Dragon, the Snake, the Horse, the Sheep, the Monkey, the Hen, the Dog and the Pig. This they had for the enumeration of years, like we, the Georgians, who have *kronik'on*.

The Mongols worshiped a single god, whom they called Tengri. And they began their writings with the words: "Mangu Tengri Kuchundur," which means: "By the power of immortal God."

They got by with little food, for they ate all living creatures: cat meat, dog meat, or any other kind of animal. Their kin consisted, in the past as well as today, of many clans, among which we will mention just twelve: the foremost among them was the clan – Saq'irs, (then) Kindis, Q'atis, Jalairs, Oirids, Suldus', Nahims, Q'onghards, Manghuts, Tanghuts, Q'aits and Uighurs.

The Uighurs worshiped an idol which they called Kujin. They called themselves in their language "Mongols," though the Georgians called them – Tatars, and I am representing them as one whole tribe.

5. Among the Q'aits, one of the tribes, a man by the name of Temurchi stood out, who is Genghis-khan. He was handsome, stately, with slightly reddish hair, powerful, brave, fearless in battle, an artful archer, deep in reasoning and lucky in ventures. He went once to the senior King, called a khan, whose name was On-khan, to receive gifts and honors. As soon as the latter saw him (Temurchi), he was enchanted by him because of his virtues, and he raised him to be equal to the nobles of the highest rank. He appointed him the commander of his troops, and Temurchi annihilated all the detractors and apostates who rejected his power, and from everywhere he returned victorious to his master, the King On-khan. Temurchi was given the greatest possible honors.

Utkin, the brother of On-khan and his own son Kurak began to envy Temurchi and they said to On-khan: "He wants to seize your kingdom and the people already call him khan." And On-khan decided to kill him, but Temurchi found out about his plan, for two men, whose names were Kurak and Bad informed him, saying: "On-khan craves greatly for your death".

He escaped and took those two men with him. He came to his home – his yurt, and took his family with him and rode the whole day and night. Then leaving his household, goods and herds behind him, he came to the bank of the river, which is called Baljun, and, moving his squad out of the way, entered into a ravine by himself.

But On-khan learned of the flight of Temurchi and set out after him at once, and caught up with his household and his herds. On-khan seized many prisoners and his army took much spoil. Then Temurchi fell unexpectedly on On-khan's army, and engaged him in battle, which was forceful and fierce. Countless numbers of people were slain on both sides; and Temurchi defeated On-khan, pursued him and killed him. He rushed onward to the household of On-khan and seized all his belongings, his wife and his children, with the exception of the On-khan's elder son Kurak.

And he mounted On-khan's throne, and Temurchi was given the name Genghis Khan.

After that he engaged in battle with the King of the Q'ongards, Altu-khan, overpowered him and killed him; Genghis Khan took possession of his kingdom. Then On-Khan's son, Kurak went to Gor-khan and, joining forces with him, fought Genghis Khan. Genghis Khan won the battle, overpowered Gor-khan and killed him, and subjected Gor-khan's troops to his command.

After that he advanced against the Uighurs, those, who called their king, Edut. At that time the Emir of the Uighurs was someone by the name of Sarchuk, whose deeds are like amazing fairy-tales, fairy-tales that are rather filthy at that, so that it would be improper to talk of them. But Genghis Khan showed mercy to him and kept him in esteem; Genghis Khan defeated a great number of  
5 Tatars and subjected them. He also subdued the Q'arq'its.

And as soon as he had dominated the Tatars, some wonderful man came, so it was rumored, from Tebtengrs. He appeared before the Khan and spoke the following words: "I am going to the mountain which is called Baliq': I hear the voice of God. And God orders: I am going to hand over to Temurchi and his soldiers all the lands, and let his name be Genghis Khan."

10 But the story of how Genghis Khan ascended a high mountain, and how the Lord Jesus Christ appeared before him, the God of all, is also often told. He taught Genghis Khan the law, faith, innocence and truth, unacceptance of lies, and many other things, telling him: "If you remember these rules, all the lands and tribes will be given to you. Go and take as many of them (the lands), as will be in your power."

15 After becoming khan, he went to Khat'aeti and entered the church and beholding the image of the Savior Jesus Christ bowed instantly before it saying: "That is the man I have seen on the Chineti mountain; the same in appearance, and he taught me all those laws." And Genghis Khan fell in love with Him, blessed Him and observed accurately all the laws given by Him. Then he fought with the khan of the Khat'aetians, Arslan Khan, and defeated him. He captured two hundred  
20 thousand of his people and executed them. Learning of that, Arslan Khan entered his home with his wife and children, and ordered his servants to set it on fire. They did as he told them. And Arslan Khan perished with his entire family in the flames. Genghis Khan came and mounted his throne, and brought Khat'aeti under his rule. And so it remains to our days.

### **A few words about Genghis Khan's children**

25 6. Genghis Khan had many wives, as well as children. His senior wife, Sevinji,<sup>2</sup> gave birth to a son, who was given the name Tushi, whom the Georgians called Jochi. The second son was – Chaghat'a, the third – Okota, the fourth – Tuli. These four, who were stationed in Khat'aeti, he appointed khans. To the senior – Tushi – he gave half of his (own) troops and sent him to Great Q'ivchaq'ia, Ovseti, Khazaria and Russia down to the (lands of) Dark. And all those lands he gave  
30 to his son, and of the others we will tell of later.

And so, learning of the approach of the Tatars, the highest and the greatest of all Kings, Khuarazmsha, who was at an advanced age at the time (the sultanate, as well as the government of his domain were in the hands of his son Jalaldin), and who held territories down to Jeon, Khorasan and Iran, called his son, Jalaldin, with his army of six hundred thousand men and advanced towards  
35 Genghis Khan.

Genghis Khan set out against Khwarazmsha. They engaged in a brutal and fierce battle, in which numberless people were killed on both sides, and the Khorezmians were defeated. In the course of the battle, the aged Khwarazmsha, remaining with a small detachment of fighters, was surrounded by the Tatars. His son – the Sultan Jalaldin – valorous and brave, courageous and fearless like some immaterial being, superb, strong and an excellent fighter, came to the rescue of his father with a small group of soldiers, picked him up, and together they fled to Khorasan. 5

And again, more than once, Jalaldin fought with the Tatars – three times he engaged them in battle beyond Jeon and four times in Khorasan, on this side of Jeon. And so, on account of our sins, the Lord placed our country in the hands of the Tatars; Jaladin was overpowered and driven away. Learning of his flight and his hiding in the fortress, Genghis Khan sent two chiefs in pursuit – Iama and Sanp'ian, whom the Georgians call Seba and Jebo. He ordered them to cross the lands of Khorasan and Iraq and to explore these countries as much as they could. 10

They advanced with twelve thousand horsemen without armor and provision, having only bows with them, and no swords. They passed through Turan, Jeon, Khorasan, Iraq, Adarbadagan<sup>3</sup> and reached Gandzi.<sup>4</sup> And there was no one who could oppose them. They defeated everybody who they met on their way. They reached the borders of Georgia and ravaged the lands of Gaga. Varam of Gaga and *atabag* Ivane learned of this and informed King Lasha of the invasion of foreign tribes, with foreign languages, and about the ravaging of Somkhiti. The King called up his army and gathered ninety thousand horsemen. They advanced towards the Tatars who were camped around Gaga. Then they were joined by the large army of *atabag* Ivane and his nephew Shanshe, the son of his brother *amirsp'asalar* Zachariah, and Varam of Gaga, and they set out to meet the enemy. 20

However the Tatars had been camping on the bank of Berduji, which is now called Sagimi.<sup>5</sup> They saddled their horses in a flash and engaged in battle. And a fierce encounter took place. Half of the Tatars fled, but the other half, being hidden and waiting in ambush, attacked the Georgians unexpectedly from the rear. And then the wrath of the Highest fell upon us for all our sins and lack of faith, and the Georgians took flight, their soldiers and King Lasha<sup>6</sup> as well. Many Christian souls perished that day. The great *atabag* Ivane, *sp'asalar* of Samtskhe, had a narrow escape, and Beka the son of *mech'urch'letukhutsesi* Q'uarq'uaire, and an excellent warrior, was killed. And God's wrath fell upon us in full, condemning the Georgian people for its lack of faith, turning fortune away from the great and glorious House of David, for up to that time the merciful Lord, who determines our fortunes, had granted victories to the happy House of David. The victorious lineage of David and Gorgasali had never suffered defeat. But after this, because of the turning of fortune's wheel, the Georgian people were never granted a single victory over the Tatars, and so it is up to our times. 30

Once glorious and powerful, they came to the town as fugitives. Their strength and glory was replaced by mournful sighs. And the Tatars reached Samshvilde,<sup>7</sup> then turned back and did something wonderful: they went by the road of Daruband,<sup>8</sup> and because neither the Shirvanshah<sup>9</sup> nor the Darubandians could resist them, they passed the Darubandi Gates, entered Q'ivchaq'ia and engaged the local population in battle; and the Q'ivchaq's<sup>10</sup> fought in many places with them, but the Tatars defeated them everywhere; so, fighting as they moved, they left. And as I have noted already, 40

they did this without armor and rode on unshod horses. Crossing Q'ivchaq'ia and rounding the Darubandean Sea, they reached Q'araq'urum (Karakorum) and appeared before their King, Genghis Khan. And they acted quite strangely: crossing all those roads and exiting Q'araq'urum on unshod horses and without rest, they returned there once again.

5 Learning that the Tatars prevailed everywhere, Genghis Khan sent his sons on the search for Jalaldin, the Sultan of Khorasan. Receiving these tidings, Sultan Jalaldin summoned his army and many times engaged them in battle. But feeling his own impotence, he moved on with his entire household, escorted by one hundred and forty thousand of his soldiers with all their households, trying to escape from the pursuing Tatars. They made their way into our country, of which we will in  
10 the following.

One year passed and King Lasha fell ill, for the wrath of God, who we had angered was not assuaged. Feeling the approach of his end, King Lasha summoned all the distinguished nobles of his kingdom and entrusted them with his sister, Rusudan, telling them with tears in his eyes:  
15 "Knowing well of the blameless devotion of the royal family to you, people of Georgia, and trusting in God, I charge you with my Sister, Rusudan, for you will have to make her a queen, as it has been the custom of your ancestors. Serve her faithfully and protect by your courage the royal throne from the spite of its enemy. For though she is not a man, but a woman, she is not lacking the wisdom and the knowledge for governing a state. You, the distinguished people of this kingdom, should know and remember the grace, generosity and homage of my blessed and well-remembered mother, glorious  
20 among the Kings. And, if such is the will of God, my sister, too, will be favored with your respect. Now I pray to you before God to make her the Queen, my successor. And my sister Rusudan, and that I say before God for everybody to hear, I entrust with the commission of bringing up my son David, and when he achieves the ability to rule and becomes a capable warrior, let her make him the king, or make him a monarch and the heir to my kingdom. And though he is small yet, if the Lord  
25 wishes him to grow up, he, I believe, will become quite worthy to reign, for he is stately of body, and fine of face."

Completing his order, he found peace for himself, leaving unspeakable grief and sorrow behind him. And his sister Rusudan was mourning him for many days, and they brought him to their burial place in Gelati.

## 30 II

7. Upon the passing of the King, all the distinguished (people) of his kingdom gathered, the Imiers and Amiers,<sup>11</sup> both catholicoses and bishops, from Nik'opsia<sup>12</sup> and up to Daruband; all subjects recognized Rusudan's<sup>13</sup> claim to be Queen; they enthroned her, and congratulated her with her ascension to the throne.

35 And Rusudan was fine in appearance like her blessed mother, gentle, generous, and fond of upright and well-behaved people. She settled peacefully everything that was subject to her administration, and filled her whole kingdom with all kinds of goods.

But then people began to display insatiability and idleness, and everybody turned to evil. And because they had forgotten God, the Lord subjected them to obscene outrages and massacres at the hands of the heathens. Queen Rusudan adopted her brother's habits and indulged herself in idleness and amusement, from which originated the great evil.

Sultan Jalaldin was tired from the fight with the Tatars and one day he turned to his soldiers and said to them: "You, my dear *marzapans* and *eristavis*, are aware and remember well the kindness and favors of my forefathers. Now you know what has befallen both me and you, due to the alien Tatar tribes. Many times we engaged them in battle and spent much effort, but in compliance with God's design, everywhere we were defeated. Now Genghis Khan has approached the river of Jeon and is sending his first-born son to fight us. So such is my decision: since God has granted him victories, let us, as it is also your desire, leave this country and take our families, belongings and herds with us and move to Greece and settle ourselves there. For while the Tatars overcame us, we on our part can defeat all the other tribes. So let those, who want to do so, join us, but let those, that have no such desire, remain, for let the wish of each be granted."

Everybody resolved to accept the offer and taking their households and all their belongings they set out and came to Adarbadagan, about one hundred and forty thousand men in number, and they reached the estates of Mkhargrdzeli; *atabag* Ivane was given (the town) Dvin, and Ani was given to the son of his brother – *mandat'urtukhutsesi* Shanshe.

The Khoesmiens came the third year after the passing of Lasha Giorgi, with the aim of ravaging and seizing the lands and population of Dvin. Learning this, *atabag* Ivane and Varam of Gaga appeared before Queen Rusudan and told her of the appearance of the Khoesmiens and the great Sultan Jalaldin in person, who would ruin the Christians. They destroyed every living thing, mercilessly, sparing neither women, nor babies.

When Rusudan learned of the incursion of the Khoesmiens into her kingdom, she summoned an army of youths, of Imiers and Amiers, unfolded the royal banner and called upon *atabag* Ivane, advanced in age, a man still reasonable and virtuous but who at that time had secretly taken monastic vows. Rusudan appointed him the commander of her army and, handing him her banner, sent him to make war on Sultan Jalaldin.

They reached Dvin and Amoberdi. The Khoesmiens had set up a camp in the village that is called Garni, and when the Queen's army moved forward, Sultan Jalaldin took to the field. *Atabag* Ivane quickly lined up the royal soldiers, Imiers and Amiers, and in the vanguard, the people of Tori and two brothers – Shalva and Ivane from Akhaltsikhe<sup>14</sup> – glorious soldiers, whose family was used to leading troops.

When the Georgian soldiers of the front ranks approached the Sultan, *atabag* Ivane refused to advance. They say that he did this out of envy of the Akhaltsikhians, Shalva and Ivane. Oh, envy, the source of all the evils, that cruelly exterminates the human race, it spares no tribe! It made the Jews kill the Lord, and now, with the fiercest persistence and the heartlessness of evil, it prompted a man to consider the elimination of the whole Georgia, so that as it will be clear from the following, it induced *atabag* Ivane to stay aloof above the battle and abstain from rendering aid to the fighters.

The advancing fighters sent to Ivane a messenger with the words: "We approached the Sultan and his troops, but we are in an extreme minority and the battle is going to be hard. Let the chosen royal troops, enforced by your courage, come hastily to our aid." And so two or three times they sent messengers to him, but he did not give them an answer. But because the Torians and particularly the Akhaltsikhians, Shalva and Ivane, fighting in the forefront were fearless in battle, they were not discouraged by the numerical superiority of the Sultan's army, and like beasts of prey they rushed upon the enemy, demonstrating glorious fighting skills; and countless people fell on both sides. But Shalva and Ivane fought powerfully, smashing the brave and formidable enemy. The fierce battle went on. Meanwhile *atabag* Ivane and the Georgian troops observing the hot combat from the side, took no pity on their kinsmen and their brothers in the faith of Christ, the Torians, and many other distinguished people with them. *Atabag* Ivane did not come and help them, because of envy, they say, not from cowardice.

And in the course of the battle the horses fell under both Akhaltsikhians, but even on foot they continued to fight bravely. And the warriors fell in great numbers on both sides, but most of all the Torians. When the fight became still more furious and the swords of the Akhaltsikhians broke over the helmets of the Khoresmians, the Georgians took flight. Shalva was seized, unable to withstand the others' overwhelming power, and Ivane, having found cover in the rocks of Garni, was killed by a stone thrown down on him. Shalva was presented to Sultan Jalaldin. The Nakhchevanians and Adarbadaganians, having recognized him told the Sultan of his courage and valor in battle.<sup>15</sup> And the Sultan, far from executing him, kept him by himself in great respect, and even presented him with some towns in Adarbadagan, and honored him equally with his own nobles. One year later however, he was put to death for refusing to reject his faith.

*Atabag* Ivane returned to Bijnisi, and the Sultan set out for Adarbadagan and Nakhchevan. From there he devastated Georgia, ravaging the land, kidnapping people, and killing mercilessly. There was no one to give comfort. Two years later *atabag* Ivane passed away and his son Avag was made *mtavari* and given the title of *amirsp'asalar*.

8. After this, a great evil embraced the Georgian people, complete destruction became our lot, because of our lack of righteousness. The Sultan took up arms against Georgia, with the intention of becoming its king. He devastated all the lands, and the region of Dvin, and Ani, Armenia, and Gagi up to Gandza and Shankur. Up to that time Shankur with adjoining lands belonged to Varam of Gaga, a reasonable man and distinguished in battles. Such discord and misfortune roamed all about the country.

At this time Queen Rusudan had the son of Ort'ul brought to her as a hostage. Well-built, he was of a mature age, perfect of body, fearless and very strong. Taking a fancy to him, Queen Rusudan decided to marry him, which desire she then fulfilled. She made Ort'ul's son her husband and gave birth to a girl of sublime beauty. She gave her the name of her blessed mother Tamar. They begot a son and named him David. In addition, she were bringing up her nephew David – the son of Lasha-Giorgi.

When her daughter Tamar was grown up, the Sultan of Greece, Q'iasdin, son of Nukhradin learned of her fine appearance and sending many presents implored Queen Rusudan to give him

in marriage the virgin Tamar, swearing not to force her to renounce the faith of Christ. Heeding his request, Queen Rusudan married her daughter (Tamar) to him, an indecent thing for a Christian, and with great honors gave her Ats'q'uri as a dowry.

Meanwhile the Khoresmian Persians had almost entered Georgia already and were devastating its lands. Learning of the sojourn of *atabag* and *amirsp'asalar* Avag in Bijnisi, Sultan Jalaldin wanted to meet him. He sent him a messenger with the words: "You are the head of the King's viziers and are in charge of Georgia. Let us meet each other escorted only by one soldier, for I have a word to say to you." Avag accepted this and agreed to the meeting. So in the company of one man, and fully armed he came to meet the Sultan in one of the ravines of Bijnisi. They came face to face and the Sultan started as follows: "I came to Georgia having no desire to destroy it, but for peace and concert. You armed at once and engaged me, so that the peace was forgotten between us. Now you, the most noble of Georgians and the vizier of the King's court, you know my kin, my people, the greatness and the riches of my kingdom, and you know that no other sovereign can compete with me. I am the son of the highest and greatest King Khoresmshah, and I am holding sway over Persia from Adarbadagan to Jeon, and from Jeon to India, as well as Turan, Khat'aeti, Chin-Machin and the whole of the East. But by the design of the Almighty in the country of Chineti, in the unknown land called Q'araq'urum, appeared a wonderful people, talking an alien language, following alien ways of life, who subdued the entire East and defeated many Kings. They made as their King a marvelous man, versed in all matters and fearless in battle, who is called Genghis Khan. As soon as he laid his hands on Khat'aeti, I advanced upon him with the armies of Iran, Turan, Persia and Turkman and gave him battle many times over the other side of Jeon, and finally on this side. But fortune has deserted the house of Khoresmshahs and I suffered defeat everywhere. When the Khan's strength had grown, I realized that I had no more power to withstand him, so I left my kingdom and came to Georgia in search of peace and an alliance with you. I am aware of the firmness of your country and military valor of the Georgian people and I want now to unite with you in a solemn vow and to fight our enemies together. I heard that a woman is ruling over you, so make me her husband and your King, and we will overpower all our enemies. If you refuse to accept this, you will bring your kingdom to ruin. For even if I leave you now, the Tatars are already here, and you have no power to withstand them. Send a messenger to your Queen and inform her of what I have told you now. Far from desiring the devastation of Georgia, I want to defend it from its enemies, to increase my power with your aid, and live in peace." Hearing the words of the Sultan, Avag gave no answer, but said: "I will pass your words to the Queen and her viziers." He at once sent a messenger to the Queen and informed her of what had been said.

When the words of this proposal and the message reached her, the Queen began to wonder, for she thought it to be a very unusual thing. Avag was told to ignore the Sultan's appeal and reject it outright. Avag immediately informed the Sultan, and the latter, receiving the answer, set out with his army for Tbilisi with the aim of seizing it.

9. Learning of the approach of the Sultan, Queen Rusudan set out for Kutaisi, putting the troops under the command of the brothers Botso and Memna, sons of Botso, with the task of defending the

city. The Sultan invaded Somkhiti and devastated it entirely; its population found their death at the sword. And then they (the Khoresmians) came to Tbilisi.

The defenders of the city armed themselves and put up a fierce battle to save the city; it was a brilliant battle on the part of the Georgians. But then, one night, the Persians living in Tbilisi sent a man to Sultan Jalaldin with a promise to commit treachery and open the gates which they were guarding, and to incite an uprising inside. In the morning the Sultan armed himself again, hoping to take advantage of the betrayal. The defenders of the city, the sons of Botso – Memna and Botso – suspected nothing, and armed themselves and went to the gate of Gandza with the intention of making a sortie. When they started putting on their helmets, one of the Persians struck Memna heavily on his uncovered head with a large flat sword, and Memna fell dead. A fight broke out inside, for the Persians of Tbilisi revolted and opened the gates of the city. When the betrayal from inside became evident, the defenders of the city fled to Isani. Botso, the son, reinforced Isani and put up a fierce battle against the enemy. The pain in my heart does not allow me to tell what the Khoresmians did in the town. Who can tolerate the words they uttered and endure the ordeals that befell the Christians at the hands of these heathens? Here I would like to keep silent, because with pain in my heart, I have to tell how thoroughly they indulged in their cruelty, taking babies off the breasts of their mothers and smashing them before their mother's eyes upon rocks; or they tore out their eyes and broke their skulls, and only then killed their mothers; the aged men they trampled down in the streets with their horses, the youngsters they killed with their swords; and rivers of blood were flowing everywhere; human brains – of women, old people and babies, blood and hair, heads and parts of human bodies, entrails, trampled down in the mud by horses – everything was mixed together. Knowing no mercy they put the people to death by severing their shoulders, turning them over on their backs and disemboweling them.

Oh, such injustice and such desperate lamentation! The sounds of crying and heartrending moans shook the city. People groaned like a flock of sheep, some saw their beloved children, others their brothers and fathers, their wives – perishing in dishonor, trampled by horses in the streets, torn to pieces by dogs, deprived of the right to be buried. Churches and altars were desecrated, and honest priests were murdered and icons and crosses destroyed. A calamity befell us, of which the like has never been described in the books of old, and only comparable perhaps to the complete destruction by Titus and Vespasian of Jerusalem, the city of the Jews, those crucifiers of Christ. The chronicler and narrator Josef Flavius, wrote about the destruction of the Jews and says that about three million men died from starvation and murder by the sword. A similar thing happened to the city of Tbilisi at the time of the Saracen invasion.

Because there were neither forces nor any hope of relief, Queen Rusudan sent an order to Botso and other defenders of the city to leave Isani and retreat. With much difficulty the Queen had managed to persuade Botso to abandon (Isani), for many times she sent him messages with her permission to do so, as the Elder Mghvimeli writes about it.

And so taking the city in his severe grip, the Sultan resorted to the cruelest of cruel things ever committed against Christians. He so mercilessly murdered people that the streets, ravines and ditches were filled with dead bodies while most of the corpses were thrown into the river Mt'k'vari. That did

not pacify him, this hateful adept of the false faith, and he invented a new mischief; recounting it fills me with shame. Grief and tears overcome me, for how could we enrage so our most merciful comforter the Lord. Jalaldin set about destroying the churches, and after razing them to the ground, he then (even) dared to raise his hand upon the church of Zion, attempting to destroy its dome; for he conceived putting his foul seat on it, or to use it as a bridge for his ascent to a high platform. And yet one more thing he added: he ordered to take away the icons of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Mother of God, which belonged to Zion, and put them on a platform facing up. He forced the people subjected by him, the men as well as the women, to trample the holy icons with their feet and renounce their faith, beheading those who refused to do so. In order to carry out this will of his, men were brought over together with their wives and made to trample on the icons. However many showed brilliant resistance and disobedience, refusing to profane the holy icons and renounce their beliefs. A lot of men and women Jalaldin found valorously accepting the crown of martyrdom; they were not counted, because of their great number, but it seems to me it came to a hundred thousand. 10. So, laying waste to Tbilisi, they set out to raid, captivate, defeat and devastate Somkhiti, K'ambechiani and the banks of Iori, Kartli and Trialeti, Javakheti and Art'aani, part of Samtskhe and T'ao, K'arnipora and the lands adjoining Anisi. 5 10 15

And this calamity and the wrath sent by God continued for five years; the country was ravaged for two years, and for five years the enemy stationed itself in the city, devastating all the above-noted lands. All the buildings were razed to the ground, with the exception of the fortresses and strongholds. All this was because the Georgian country had been handed over to its enemies for destruction, because its kings and *mtavaris* had renounced law, mercy, love and justice, acquiring instead, arrogance, perfidy, envy, malice, theft, hate, greed, murder, and lechery. As the Apostle says: "Woe to one who treads the path of Balaam and commits the actions of sodomites." For people of all ages, young and old, turned their face toward evil and sank into disease and the suffering of Sodom and Gomorrah. And the Lord in his power subjected them to a cruel death, because we are doomed by God, whom we have forgotten and who has justly forgotten us. The country of Georgia was devastated, beginning with Likhi, and as the Prophet Isaiah says: "Woe to unrighteous people, to people full of sin, malicious tribes, offspring of the faithless; you have rejected the Lord and angered the Saint, who is from Israel. Why are you wounding yourself, disbelieving, subjecting your flesh to disease and your hearts to grief, now and again, from head to toe? And there is no peace on this path, nor life, no comfort, no healing balm, nor oil, nor bandage. Your country is devastated and your city burned down. Your villages will be swallowed up by a foreign seed and witnessed by you; you have been wasted and ruined by people of foreign seed. And the daughters of Zion remained like sheep in a vineyard, like vegetables, or like a besieged city. If the Lord of Sabaoth had left to us the seed, we would have turned into those of Sodom and Gomorrah." 20 25 30 35

But the country of Georgia, which was steeped in inconsolable grief, experienced yet other great hardship. So let us recommence the interrupted story. Queen Rusudan, constrained by hardships, remained in Kutaisi and in Abkhazia.<sup>16</sup> And when her son David became five years old, an idea came to her – to make him a King. And as is a custom among worldly pleasure-seekers, she became so fond of the temporal world that losing fear of God and forgetting her brother's love, she conceived 40

the things disgraceful to any man; for she sent secretly her nephew David – who under her brother Giorgi's will was entrusted to her – to Greece, to her daughter and son-in-law, Q'iasdin, with the purpose of destroying him, and so leaving the Kingdom to her own son thoroughly and securely.

And when David appeared before the Sultan and his father's niece – Rusudan's daughter,  
5 Tamar – whom the Sultan called Gurji-Khatun, the Sultan took a fancy to him; and so he and Tamar kept David close and in honor. Queen Gurji-Khatun kindly treated the youth, her cousin David, not heeding the murderous order of Queen Rusudan. And thus he was held in respect.

As soon as Rusudan sent her nephew to Greece, she summoned her Abkhazian army, the Dadian-Bedianis, *eristavi* of Rach'a, and the Katholikos of Abkhazia. They made David, Rusudan's  
10 son, a King, blessed him in Kutaisi and placed the crown upon his head. In this way they enthroned him, and in compliance with the existing custom, congratulated him on his accession to the throne; and the Katholikos anointed him.

The rest of the country on this side of Likhi could not attend the ceremony, as they were oppressed by the Khoresmians; *mandat'urtukhutsesi* Shanshe remained in Anisi, and *amirsp'asalar*  
15 Avag in Bijnisi, and Varam of Gaga, the Eris and K'akhis, Somkhitis, Torelians, Shavshians, K'larjians, T'aoans – all of them found shelter in their fortresses; and they remained subject to Queen Rusudan, but they did not assist at the coronation of David.

11. Here, let us turn again to Genghis Khan. At the time when the Tatars reached our country, Sultan Jalaldin fled and left his Kingdom. The Tatars easily seized Turan, Turkey and the whole of  
20 Khorasan. Then Genghis Khan divided his army in four and appointed his four sons Khans: to his firstborn son, Tushi, he gave half of his army and sent him to the great Q'ivchaq'ia down to the country of Dark, Ovseti, Khazaria and Russia down to the Borgars and Serbs, to all the peoples of the North Caucasus, as I already noted; to his second son, Chaghat'a, he assigned some troops and the country of Uighurs down to Samarkand and Bukhara, as far as the country of Almaliq', which is  
25 perhaps Turan; to his third son, Okota, he granted his throne, as well as Q'araq'urum, Chin-Machin, the countries of Emelia, Q'ubaq' and Khat'aeti; his fourth son was called Tuli; to him he gave an army and the lands to the east of the dominion of Okota.

The four of them he appointed Khans and instructed the elder brothers to come once a year to Okota for the convocation of the Q'urulta, because the throne had been given to Okota.

30 And so having fixed his legacy, he came to Turan and sent his younger son, Tuli, to Khorasan for some reconnaissance. Tuli crossed Jeon and entered Nishabur, where the Nishaburians engaged him in battle three times. In the very first battle he seized a town in which he beheaded three hundred thousand men, in the second – one hundred thousand, and in the third – thirty two thousand. And here is the truth for those who do not want to believe it: all this was seen by the brother of the great  
35 sahib-divan, Khoja Shamsadin, an eyewitness to the ravaging of Nishabur.

Then Tuli moved on from Turan, crossed Khorasan, Mazandaran and approached the country of Iraq.

Learning of this, Sultan Jalaldin set out from Tbilisi and with all his people and belongings set out to wage war with the Tatars. He came to Adarbadagan and sent envoys to the Sultan of Khlati  
40 and the Khalif, the ruler of Baghdad, with a request to help him as well as their own selves.<sup>17</sup> He

also sent a note to the Sultan of Iraq: "If you have no desire to take part personally in the fight with the Tatars, send me your army, for I am experienced in fighting with them. But if you do not heed my warning, you, yourself, will be unable to offer any resistance to them, unless I bar their way."

When the envoy of the Sultan came to Iraq, they had shown no desire to wage war with the Tatars. Learning of this, the Sultan concluded that he could not stand alone against the Tatars, left Adarbadagan and retreated again to Tbilisi. Receiving tidings of all this, Queen Rusudan summoned her whole army, the Imiers and Amiers, *mandat'urtukhutsesi* Shanshe, *amirsp'asalar* Avag, *msakhurtukhutsesi* Varam, the Ers, K'akhis, Somkhits, Meskhis, T'aoans, Tso't'ne Dadiani, a man honorable and virtuous, the Abkhazians, the Jikis and everybody from the kingdom of Imereti, for to tell of all them separately would take too much time. And she opened the Gate of Darial and let in the Ovses, the Durdzuks<sup>18</sup> and all the mountain dwellers in addition. They gathered in Nach'armagevi, in countless numbers, and the Queen sent them to make war with the Khoesmiens.

She did not give them the royal banner because of the accident with *atabag* Ivane. They set out and left Tbilisi. The Sultan was camping in Somkhiti, in Bolnisi Ravine. The sentries of the Sultan saw the Georgians, and they reported it to him. He, being fearless, armed himself and came out at the head of his troops; a fierce battle took place, and the Georgians overpowered the enemy in the beginning. Though as the battle gained in heat and a great number of people fell on both sides, God threw a wrathful glance at the Georgian people, for His wrath had not softened and His arm was suspended over our heads, high above. He remembered the want of belief on our part. The royal army was defeated, and they fled from the Khoesmiens. And the Sultan again entered Tbilisi. They robbed whoever they caught. And the Khoesmishah ravaged all the lands.

The chief of the Tatars, Tuli, crossed Iraq down to Kaevin; he ravaged the country, slew the disobedient, departed, and crossed Khorasan and Jeon, then returned and appeared before his father Genghis Khan and his brothers. As soon as Genghis Khan learned of the complete flight of Sultan Jalaldin, he summoned the *erismtavaris*, whom the Georgians call *noins*, who bore the names Chormaghan, Chaghat'a, Iosur and Bicho. These four had been given ten thousand soldiers each with all their households, and were sent in search of the Sultan. All four of these *noins* were sons of the Khan. All of them were instructed that, wherever they went, they had to spare people if they asked for God's mercy, but to destroy all those who refused to submit; and the tribute of the subjected country was to be divided into four parts and sent to their sovereign.

So, all four of these *noins* set out – Chormaghon, Chaghat'a, Iosur and Bicho; they crossed Jeon and Khorasan with an army numbering forty thousand men and their households, and they reached the country of Almut, engaged it in battle at once, and abused it significantly. From this country they went to Iraq and ravaged it. They spared those who approached them humbly. Then they came to Adarbadagan, which is Tavriz, and all sorts of people, including the Adarbadagians, came out there to meet them with countless gifts. From there they came to the town of Ardavel. The citizens of the town met them with obedience. They passed Rahts and approached the strongly reinforced Gandza, and after three days of fighting, laid their hands on it; they stormed the town and devastated it, destroying many lives, for they believed that the faith preached by Mohammed was disgusting.

Learning of this, the Sultan gathered his household and fled in haste to Greece. The Tatars followed him and caught up with him at Basiani. Seeing the Tatars, the Khoresmians scattered. Alone, the Sultan went on and reached some small village in which he took refuge. Finding him sheltering there, an ordinary resident killed him. The Sultan's sash, saddle and quiver were trimmed with precious stones, and it was for these that the high and great monarch was killed. Our hopes in this vain world are treacherous, and as the wise Ecclesiastes says: "Everything is just a vanity of the vanities, and languor of the soul." Everything that Jalaldin had possessed – his army and his strong will, his victorious power and his excessive riches, all these things proved futile. Everything is vain, with the exception of eternal life, which is imperishable and unlimited.

The Khoresmians were scattered, most of them fled to Garmiani after the Sultan Jalaldin was murdered. And so the great kingdom disappeared. After receiving tidings of the murder of the Sultan, Khwarazmshah's son, the Sultan Q'iasdin, ordered his soldiers to bring to him the man who had brought the Sultan's sash, saddle and quiver, which were decorated with such rare stones. Those who looked upon them, marveled at them, while the murderer was burned at the stake.

12. Ending their pursuit of the Khoresmians, the Tatars ravaged the lands of Khlat and Valashkert.<sup>19</sup> The Sultan of Khlat could offer no resistance but reinforced his city. The Tatars moved to Adarbadagan, for an agreement had been established between the Tavrezhians and the Tatars.<sup>20</sup> The Tatars took Tavrezh and the adjoining lands. The next year they set out for Bardav, Ganja and Mughan,<sup>21</sup> and set about pillaging and ravaging Georgia. They started with Daruband, and the lands of Shirvan, and Kabala,<sup>22</sup> Ereti,<sup>23</sup> K'akheti, Somkhiti and the domains of the Arshak'unians – Dvin and Anisi. Moving across the lands of its neighbors, they approached Georgia, and unseen ordeals befell the people at its borders, worse than those already described, all due to the wickedness of the population of Kartli; for the people of all ages, old and young, kings and *mtavaris*, great and small, had displayed an inclination to evil. They rejected truth and righteousness, and the priests themselves showed instances of sin, and the entire nation wallowed in abomination, behaving, as the sons of Benjamin behaved in ancient times. As Isaiah the Prophet says: "The Lord, the Lord of Sabaoth has ordered an armed race to come from a distant country, the stronghold of heaven; the Lord and His army come armed to destroy this world and eliminate its sins. Lament, for close is the day of the Lord, the day of annihilation through Him." And then he says: "The day will come, inevitably, when the Lord, in His wrath and fury, will condemn, as in ancient times, the sinners and send them to ruin and destruction." And so the lands of Kartli were thoroughly devastated.

Learning of the approaching Tatars, Queen Rusudan left Tbilisi and retired to Kutaisi, charging the son of Mukha with the task of the defense of Tbilisi, ordering him, if the Tatars arrived, to burn down the city, including the Palace and Isani, and thus prevent, in this way, their occupation by the Tatars who would use it for their residence, like the Khoresmians had.

When the son of Mukha saw the approach of the Tatars, he burned the city down including the Palace and Isani; and so the city of Tbilisi was destroyed. And the *noins* entered Kartli, Trialeti, Somkhiti, Javakheti, Samtskhe, Shavsheti, K'larjeti, T'ao, K'ola, Art'ani, Anisi and like locusts they invaded our country, plundering and destroying it; and joy disappeared from the land, and it was brought mercilessly to ruin.

*Mandat'urtukhutsesi*<sup>24</sup> Shanshe found refuge in the country of Ach'ara; *amirsp'asalar* Avar retired to the fortress of Q'aen,<sup>25</sup> and Varam of Gaga fled to Kutaisi,<sup>26</sup> as well as the Eris, K'akhs, Somkhitar-Kartlians, Meskhis, T'aoans, Torel-Art'an-K'olaians. All fled to their fortresses, and in the mountains, to the forests and the strongholds of the Caucasus and Mtiuleti.<sup>27</sup>

The plunder and destruction of the country dragged on, owing to our deep lack of belief, for the people of every age were corrupted, and not only in Georgia, but in Persia, Babylon and Greece as well; and for that reason they were committed to a bitter captivity and merciless destruction, and nowhere could they find comfort for themselves; the cities and villages, forests, mountains and valleys were overflowing with corpses, except, perhaps, for a few survivors who had found shelter in the country's strongholds. The fathers and mothers looked at their dead children and the children at their dead fathers and mothers, fallen, stark; and others looked at their dead brothers, still others looked at their dead relatives and their sisters, their kidnapped wives and children and their stolen goods. And the Tatars inspired the people with such fear that most of the Georgians left the fortresses and the strongholds and fled to the Caucasus mountains.

And thus the country was plunged into an abyss of inconsolable evil; and the mighty *eristavt-eristavis* and viziers, who had been in accord initially, rejected each other, because Queen Rusudan had settled on the other side of the Likhi for good; even the local dwellers did not appear before her for reasons of business, with the exception of fugitives. They remained so without any relations or accord between them; for the strong and glorious Georgians proved to be quite incapable even to think of boldly fighting the Tatars. Though Hereti and K'akheti were well-protected by forests. And the inhabitants of Georgia, the *eristavis*, high-ranking and fearless fighters, as well as many other people, of every rank, from top to bottom, were condemned to complete ruin.

Seeing all this evil, *amirsp'asalar* Avag, the son of *atabag* Ivane, sent an envoy to Bardav, where the leaders were stationed, who used Bardav as their winter camp, while for a summer camp they used the mountains of Gelakun<sup>28</sup> and Ararat, for Chormaghan had already captured Anisi. To these people Avag sent his envoy with an appeal for peace, telling them of his desire to come and see them, and to serve them, and to pay them *kharaj*, and to give them his lands, and he asked only for a firm oath (to the Christian faith) on their part. They exulted greatly, and received with joy the Avag's envoy and took the oath.

They believed in a single God, and in the morning, at dawn, they knelt three times facing the East, and that was all. And to confirm their oath they dipped a piece of pure gold three times in water and (then) removing it, drank the water. Much consideration was shown to those who took the oath. Confirming an oath meant they would not break it. No lie left their lips, and they destroyed resolutely robbers and other atrocious people. Many good laws were introduced by Genghis Khan. They took an oath before Avag's envoy and confirmed their troth with gold, which convinced him of the absence of falsity or treachery on their part.

The *amirsp'asalar* Avag returned, ready to sacrifice his very life for his country, and appeared before Chormaghan, Chaghat'a, Bicho and Iosur. They liked him, and they promised protection for his city. This was called "shan" in their language.

13. When Avag's domain was calmer, and Shanshe learned of the peace agreement concluded between Avag and the Tatars, he decided to secure his own domain in the same way, based on an oath, and he asked Avag to inform the Tatars of his intention. The Tatars met the news with joy; they agreed to provide him with security in the same way, receiving an oath backed with gold; and Shanshe, too, went to meet them. They gave him worthy honors, and returned Anisi to him and everything that had been taken away by them from his domain, and installed soldiers to defend his estates. And they rendered honors to any of the Georgian *mtavaris* that came to them, but the estates of those who disobeyed, they destroyed.

Learning of all this, Varam of Gaga, son of Zachariah, too, set his hopes on peace, and his country was pacified. Yet Hereti and K'akheti, Somkhiti, Kartli and K'arnukalaki, all these lands were horribly devastated; the population was robbed and taken captive, the men were slain, and only women and youngsters were placed in captivity.

They occupied the city of Tbilisi and started its reconstruction.<sup>29</sup> They camped for the winter in Bardav and on the banks of the Mt'k'vari and Iori, and upstream, up to Gagi. They occupied and robbed Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti, and the lands bordering Greece, and also K'akheti, and Hereti – to Daruband. Cheerless and full of sorrow because of these circumstances, all the dignitaries of Georgia committed themselves to the Tatars – the Er-K'akhs and Kartlians, Gamrek'eli from Tori, Sargis from Tmogvi, a scholarly man and philosopher and many others. The Meskhis on the other hand held out, remaining loyal to Queen Rusudan. Angered, *noin* Chaghat'a took up arms against Samtskhe, but the Meskhis hid themselves in fortresses. A lot of the Samtskhians were killed and captured, and a great number of people perished.

When their forces were diminished, Ivane Jaq'eli from Tsikhis-jvari, who was also called Q'uarq'ware, reported to Queen Rusudan that if she wanted to save the country of Samtskhe from destruction, she too, should address Chaghat'a, for the *Mech'urch'letukhutsesi* and the *mtavari* of the country of Samtskhe were treated with honor by the Tatars. The Queen assented, and gave her permission. Then Ivane went to the Tatars and met Chaghat'a, who welcomed him with respect and assigned guards to his country.

So laying their hands upon the country, these four *erismtavaris* divided the land into four parts, together with its *eristavis*, and each took his part of the *kharaj*, which was collected and sent to the Tatars. And so the country gradually settled down.

Thinking carefully, Queen Rusudan, deprived by the Tatars of one part of her country, decided to send her son David and entrust him to the Tatars, making sure first that they swore to protect his security. And she sent Shanshe, Avag, Varam and the *eristavi* of Hereti, Shota, who was called K'up'ari because of his swarthinness, as envoys to the Tatars.

But before sending her son, the Queen decided to set out on a campaign against the great Sultan Q'iasdin,<sup>30</sup> of the Seljukid family, who had occupied Greece. And the Tatars sent *noin* Bicho together with the high-ranking Georgian *mtavaris*.<sup>31</sup> They entered the lands of Sevast' and Eznik' and began ravaging it. Then Sultan Q'iasdin summoned his whole army, gathering together forty *bevrís* of soldiers, which makes up four hundred thousand, and appointed an Abkhaz, son of Sharvash, Dardin by name, to head them.<sup>32</sup> For his courage he had been raised to a position of great honor

by the Sultan, and he was in the firm possession of the faith. And also Fakhradavl, son of Shalva of Akhaltsikhe from Tori, a brave man and distinguished as a fighter who had fled secretly to the Sultan, was made a commander. The Sultan put these two commanders at the head of his army. He approached the Mongols and set up a camp close to them.

The news of the arrival of the Sultan who wished to engage in battle with them, made the Tatars proud and angry; Bicho, hearing of it, told the Georgians who attended him what he thought. He met the nephew of Q'uarq'ware Jaq'eli, by name of Sargis, a man brave and fearless, and skillful in battle, and told him: "What would be my reward for bringing these good tidings? For the great Sultan has heard of our arrival and is here already, close by, setting up a camp with a great and countless army, thinking of beginning a battle with us no later than tomorrow."

Hearing this, Sargis said in amazement: "*noin*, I know of the courage of your army and your victories, though given the strength of their army I do not expect any good coming of it." But Bicho answered him smiling: "You do not know well our Mongolian race, for the Lord granted us such might that we do not give a pin for the size of an army, and we gain victories easier, when the opponents are greater in number, and take spoil in abundance. And now prepare yourself to behold the battle of tomorrow and see how we fight our enemy." So proud they were of themselves, more than any other people.

At dawn the Sultan came with a formidable army, for there were about four hundred thousand soldiers divided into detachments. And the Tatars arranged their troops, placing some specially selected ones on their left flank. That was their rule, placing the best on their left meant they set their choicest and bravest against the best of the other armies, because they generally placed them on their right; so the select could oppose the select. The red color of their banners stood for the spilled blood of their enemies.

All the Georgians were placed in the advance divisions; as they closed in with the enemy, the Tatars began to cry and to exclaim loudly: "Akhla, akhla, akhla!" rushing headlong. The Georgians were the first there, and they engaged powerfully, and a fierce battle began. A mighty number of the Sultan's people fell, and among them the glorious son of Sharvash – Dardin, the Abkhazian, their commander. And the Sultan's men were put to flight, and the Tatars and Georgians pursued them, slaying them and taking many captives. The Akhaltsikhian had been killed by the Sultan himself, as a revenge on the Georgians. From the very beginning the Georgians fought so valiantly, they amazed their Mongol commanders who expressed their affection and respect for them, and rewarded them with gifts, and rendered them praise.

14. The Georgians and the Tatars gorged themselves with all kinds of riches, gold and silver cups and vessels, and precious garments. There was no end to the horses, mules and camels, which they captured. And so loaded, pursuing the Sultan, they came to Greece at Ikoni, which is a rather large city, reinforced by a strong wall; and here the Sultan took hasty shelter. A great battle took place by the city gate, but the account is not given in detail. Every day without a break, the Sultan's forces made sallies and gave battle to their enemies; the Georgians fought valorously and continuously.

Exhausted by the fight, the Sultan sued for peace, and promising the Tatars an ample and heavy *kharaj*, he pacified them by multiple presents and priceless stones and asked for protection and not meeting him for some time until they would decide something else for the better. Accepting his offer, the Tatars turned back and came to Khlat, and the Sultan of Khlat sued for peace and met them with  
5 countless gifts; and the Tatars kindly welcomed him and assigned guards to his domain, which are known as “shan.”

They retired to their summer stations in Gelakuni and the mountains of Ararat; they sent an envoy to Queen Rusudan for the purpose of establishing peace between them, and asked her to yield them her son David, so that they could grant him the kingdom: Tbilisi, and the whole of Georgia.  
10 These words pleased Rusudan, and in her heart she cherished the thought that the Mongols always observed their oaths and displayed consideration to those who trusted them. The Queen braced herself and sent her son David to the Tatars, where he was met by Shanshe, Avag and Egarslan, who lacked manly qualities and who was received with great honor by the Tatars, Shota K'up'ari, Varam of Gaga, the *eristavi* of Kartli, Grigol from Surami, the *sp'asalar* and *mech'urch'letukhutsesi* of  
15 Samtskhe, Q'uarq'ware of Tskhisjvari, the Torelians, Tmogvians, Shavsh-K'larjetians and T'aoians. They all accompanied King David, son of Queen Rusudan. And Queen Rusudan provided him with an escort of all the *mtavaris* of Likht-Imereti: Tsot'ne Dadiani, a man honest and virtuous and distinguished in battles, Bediani, the *eristavi* of Rach'a, Gurieli, and all the nobles. They entered Tbilisi, and then went to Bardav, where the noins had made their camp. They accompanied David  
20 with great honors, escorted by a great army. Seeing him, Chormaghon, Chaghat'a, Iosur and Bicho rejoiced and rendered him and the nobles of Georgia homage, and granted him the entirety of Georgia, Tbilisi and Samshvilde, which in the first war had been seized by *noin* Iousur and Angurga with the participation of Avag. David was welcomed kindly, and he was given the name Narin David, which means David the chief.

They sent an envoy to the great Khan, who sat in Q'araq'urum, upon the throne of Genghis Khan, for Genghis Khan had passed away and his son, Okota, had laid his hands on the Khandom (q'aenoba). He was a kind man, quite generous and just by nature, though he also passed away. The son of Okota, Kuka, was made Khan, but he too, died, and Kuka's son, Mangu, took over the Khandom. An envoy was dispatched to his quarters to inform him of the seizure of Persia, Georgia,  
30 and Greece; helmets, armor and garments had been sent to him from every quarter, and the report stated: “The Georgians came in their entirety; the King and the *mtavaris* with him. They have a virtuous faith and shun falsity, and you will not find a poisoner among them.” And of the Persians they said this: “The Persians are false, traitors and perjurers, and there are poisoners (among them) in great numbers, and sodomites without number.”

The envoy came at first to Bato, who was the son of Tushi, the firstborn son of Genghis Khan, for he had the advantage (before the others) of capturing Ovseti and the Great Q'ivchaq'ia, Khazaria and Russia up to (the lands of) Dark and the Darubandean Sea. And he sent him (the King) to Khan Mangu. The latter rejoiced seeing the envoy, and wondered at the sight of his helmet. And Khan Mangu told the *noins*: “Because you have already all the evidence you need regarding the valor of  
40 the Georgians in battle, and the absence of falsity among them, as well as their fidelity, keep them

at your side in your fight with your enemy, but destroy the Persians, remove the chiefs from their country, and send them to the Khan.”

When the envoy returned, Avag, who was raised by Queen Rusudan from the rank of *amirsp'asalar* to that of *atabag*, was sent by noin Chaghat'a, together with the Sultan of Khlat, to Khan Bato. They went along unknown roads, which no man of the Georgian nation had ever walked on before. When they came to Bato, who at that time had the highest rank amongst the Khans and was the greatest, the most distinguished, and the most splendid among them, his *ejib* David, son of Ivane of Akhaltsikhe, told *atabag* Avag: “You are approaching a strange tribe and, have no knowledge of what may befall us, so I suggest you to pretend that I am your master and your chief, and you are my servant. If they decide to kill you, let me be executed, not you. I do not think that they will kill the servant together with his master.” And so, with many entreaties and much insistence, David was allowed to act this way. When they appeared before Bato, David went before him as if he was the chief among them. David showed such spirit by his willingness to sacrifice his life for that of his master. Beholding them, Khan Bato rejoiced and for many days rendered them homage. As they experienced the benefaction of Bato, the danger of death vanished. Bato summoned David, and Avag stepped forward in his place. Seeing this, the Khan addressed Avag in wonder: “Are you so ignorant or don't you know that the one behind you is your master and it doesn't befit you to advance before him?” But David answered with a smile: “My great, great victorious lord! He is my master, and I am his servant.” And the Khan asked in amazement the reason for such a sudden turn of the events. David answered: “I behaved so, great Khan, because we were ignorant about your generosity, and did not know what you had in store for us. And in case you wished to put (one of us) to death, I would be executed and not my master.” Wondering greatly at this and praising David, the Khan said: “If the Georgian people are like this, I command that they must be considered the best and the noblest among all the tribes subject to the Mongols, and will be ranked amongst the armies of Mongols. Their estates and property should belong to them, and they must be trusted in everything.” He ordered this written down in his will, and to inform of this decision great Mangu, who was the Khan in Khat'aeti and Q'araq'urum. And so it has remained, but let us return to the interrupted words.

15. Queen Rusudan left Likhi and came to Tbilisi, where she was met by all the nobles of her kingdom. She sent her son David to the Khans, who welcomed him with honor and handed over to him the entire kingdom and all the nobles and *mtavaris*. So the kingdom was again under the authority of Queen Rusudan.

Here again I resolve to keep silent, because an unbecoming story comes to my mind, for it is not consistent with propriety to say disparaging things of kings. Moses who beheld the Lord says: “Of the one, that has taken the leadership of your people, say no wicked things.” But because this book is an intermediary between the kind and the wicked, let my words be excused, for truth-telling is important to my chronology and not deceiving you. Queen Rusudan, forgetting the fear of God and the oath her brother obliged her to take, made a strange decision – she sanctioned the transfer of the kingdom to her son David. She sent a man to Sultan Q'iasdin, her son-in-law, in Greece and to her daughter Tamar, for the purpose of committing an atrocity against her nephew, the young David,

whom she had formerly sent there. Though her previous order had not been fulfilled, now she felt they had to destroy him so that she and her son David could keep the kingdom without fear.

But they would not listen to her. Rusudan sent another envoy with the same message. But, again, they would not obey. And the third time, the message about her son and her nephew, full of fratricidal ideas, but they still did not obey. Frustrated, with her heart full of rage, she forgot altogether her faith and the compassion she was expected to show to her relatives, motherly love itself. How the wise Solomon says: "The fury of a man's heart cannot overwhelm the truth of God," and so, exhausting the dregs of her goodness and displaying complete absence of righteousness, she wrote a letter to her son-in-law, Q'iasdin, informing him of the following: "I want the destruction of my nephew David, because he is the lover of your wife, my daughter, and that does not become her." Oh, the design is crueler than the evil itself! This wish for destruction exceeds in wickedness any ever heard of or executed before; and what she did to her brother and (his) son, was trampling on both her motherly and brotherly love!

The Sultan received the message. Overwhelmed with rage, he entered at once into the Queen's rooms and seizing her dishonorably by her hair, dragged her out and began kicking with all his might her beautiful face. Her body became bloody-purple; then he committed another outrage, by destroying the icons which she kept for herself. And all the maids and servants who attended her he subjected to exile and even murdered some of them. And he threatened his spouse, promising a merciless execution if she did not renounce the Christian faith and become Muslim. He exposed her to many tortures, after which, unable to endure such excessive suffering, she renounced the true faith of Christ, which up to that time she followed resolutely; for she kept priests and icons by her side openly.

They caught the young David and subjected him to many tortures in order to make him confess the truth. But he said: "I am innocent, God is my witness my aunt impugns me, and you trust her, and all this is because of the sinfulness in Georgia; she initiated my exile and is expecting to hear of my death from you. Now, you can see, high and merciful Sultan, that from the very beginning she has been contemplating my destruction." Hearing this, the Sultan softened a little. Then through Divine Providence, he refused to execute him, for the truth is inscrutable and the judgment of God is written: "Who was able to perceive the providence of the Lord, who was His witness?" But the Sultan's raging heart was not fully assuaged, and a cruel fire continued to burn within. He called some sailors and delivered David into their hands, ordering them to take him to the sea and cast him into the deep. And if they did not carry out his order, their homes and households would be plundered, and they themselves would be mercilessly killed. The helmsmen took David to the boat, sailed into the open sea, and finding themselves far from the shore, the sailors decided to cast David into the deep. But he implored the boatmen to allow him to say some prayers. And they gave him some time for that. Then he stood up and retrieved the icon of the Holy Mother of God out of his bosom and covering his face and eyes with it and shedding bitter tears (prayed in the following words): "Oh, Holy Mother of our Savior Jesus Christ, our hope and consolation, take my soul, for only in You can I find comfort for my orphan life and my unjust death, for nobody will favor me with a burial and a grave, but I will be eaten by fish. And nothing will be known of my funeral; here I am,

on the brink of my last precipice and trusting in Your mercy; I ask you to save me from the hands of the heavenly guards and their dreadful torments, prepared for me like you have done for all other sinners and doomed souls.”

And he prayed in such a tenderhearted way and shed such bitter tears. The boatmen took off his clothes as well as his icon; and he implored them passionately to return to him the icon of the Holy Mother, for he wanted to keep it by himself, and the boatmen returned the icon to him and he hung it around his neck. And when he was ready to jump into the sea, one of the boatmen, by the will of God, and through the prayers of the Holy Mother, showed mercy and put a small piece of wood in his hands. Then he was cast in the sea. David caught hold of this wood, a strong wind commenced to blow and he moved away from their sight. And the waves carried him along like Noah’s Ark, driving him towards the coast. A traveling merchant saw him and sent a swimmer to help, for he was still far from the beach, at about one *utevan*’s distance. The merchant fished him out. They dressed him promptly, and gave him food and consoled him. David, who had been enfeebled by hunger and thirst so much that he could hardly blink, recovered a little. The merchant asked him the reason he was cast into the sea. And David related everything that I have told you; the merchant rejoiced and took him to his home, and treated him respectfully and kindly like his own son. He stayed with that merchant about six months, and the news of this event began to spread all around, namely, that a merchant had found a Georgian prince who had been cast in the sea, until the rumor reached Sultan Q’iasdin. Filled with anger he sent some horsemen, and they brought David and the merchant to him; and the boatmen he threw into prison, and threatened to execute them. Learning that David was fished out of the sea by the merchant, he released the boatmen.

But his anger against David did not lessen, and quite like Herod he added another atrocity to what he had already done, for he added a new murder to the old one, adorning it with the cruelest tortures. There was a deep well there, in which there was no water. Snakes lived in it, so that it was full of fierce and mad reptiles. The well was covered with a boulder, there was pitch-darkness within, and the Sultan committed people to a cruel death there. He ordered David to be cast inside. When they brought him to the well he was holding on to his icon. They moved the boulder aside and dropped David down in the well. But he was saved, like Daniel from the lion’s jaws: not one of those so amply venomous (reptiles) touched him. And they covered (the well) with the boulder.

From the very beginning a man by the name of Sosan had been sent to accompany David by his father Lasha. Sosan followed David when he was sent (with an escort) to the well. He remembered the place, and when the Sultan’s people left, he dug a little hole under the boulder and henceforward passed through it the necessary food to David. He kept him (alive) in this way for five years. When David lay down, some of the reptiles used to wind themselves around his neck, some about his legs, the others over his bosom, and still others lay next to him. But once turning over, he accidentally squashed one of the snakes, and she bit him painfully on his side. But the other reptiles caught the snake that had bitten David, and began to lick David’s wound with their tongues and healed him in an instant; the reptiles ate the snake up. In such a wonderful way the Lord saved him from all the misfortunes that had befallen him.

16. Queen Rusudan decided to give the kingdom to her son, forgetting the words of the prophet Isaiah, when he says: "And the Lord turned His Providence upon the head of the great Asurast'an from the height and the greatness of His all-seeing eye. He said: I create with my own hands, like a chicken creates, but I can take away the eggs. Nobody can avoid me or contradict me. And can a scythe overcome the mower, and mow by itself, or can a saw raise itself above the one who moves it? In the same way – who will pick up a wand or a stick? And so – let the Lord Sabaoth cover with honor your dishonor, and scorching fire will fall on your greatness," and so it came to be with Queen Rusudan.

It is a shame for me to tell this once more, but I cannot keep silent, for Rusudan disgraced herself by all the evil that she inflicted upon the son of her brother. However, Heavenly Providence dispelled her design, like the mischief of Ahitophel against the prophet David, and did not heed it. "The Divine dispels man's design," like the plot of the Pharaoh against Moses, when He saved Moses, a fugitive, from the Pharaoh's hands. And as Joseph the chronicler, says, He saved David from the hands of Saul, and the latter's plan became void.

But let us get back to the previous story.

Queen Rusudan came to Tbilisi and sent her son, David, to the *noins*. They decided to send David to the great Khan Bato<sup>33</sup> and then to Q'araq'urum, to Khan Mangu. When Queen Rusudan learned of the departure of her son to foreign parts on a long and uncertain journey, she gave herself up to pain and fathomless grief; she shed her tears uninterruptedly and recollected all that she had done to her nephew, David, and how she had subjected him to exile; in a very similar way the Tatars sent her son in exile to Bato.

And because there was no other way to settle these things, Narin David departed and Queen Rusudan appointed a couple of his former playmates to escort him: Bega, the son of Surameli, the *eristavi* of Kartli and the *amirsp'asalar* Beshken – the son of Makhujag Gurk'eli, and she secretly gave David two valuable precious stones. He set out on the path of Avag and the Sultan of Khlat, for they had been sent to the Tatars before him. And they came to Bato, who looked kindly at King Narin David, kept him by his side for two years and then sent him to Chin-Machin and Q'araq'urum to Khan Mangu, who welcomed him kindly. And he joined Avag and remained there with Mangu.

Those four Tatar *noins* reported on the misdeeds of the Almutians, who acted against the Mongols and they (the Mongols) rose against Almut. And they assigned the Georgians their allies, and sent an envoy to Queen Rusudan (asking for her assistance in) stationing them in Georgia to conduct a campaign against Almut. But Queen Rusudan was fading sadly away, grieving for her sweet son, and passed away in Tbilisi. And the *mtavaris* took her and with great honors and howls and buried her at the burial place of her forefathers in the monastery of Gelati.

### III

17. And the Georgians were left without a king and hope. For David was thought to have died in Greece, and nobody knew what had happened to him. And everyone ruled according to his own whims, and thought only of himself, and each *eristavi* sided with his *noin*.

And the Tatars assigned chiefs for every ten thousand men, whom they called heads of a *duman*,<sup>34</sup> and appointed *mtavaris*: the first was Egarslan Bak'urtsikheli, a thoughtful person, but lacking military talents. And he was charged with the troops of Hereti, K'akheti and K'ambechiani, from Tbilisi and up to the Shemakhia mountains. And Shanshe was charged with his estates and those of Avag. Varam was charged with the whole of Somkhiti, and Grigol of Surami – with Kartli; Gamrek'eli of Tori like Egarslan, because of his young age, was charged with Javakheti, Samtskhe and further up to K'arnukalaki, and Tsot'ne Dadiani and the *eristavi* of Rach'a – with the whole Imerian part of the Kingdom.

On arranging and dividing Georgia, the Tatars set out on a campaign for Almut and took the Georgians with them, whom they divided into two parts. One half of them participated in the campaign for Almut the first year, and the other half – the next year; for seven years they continued the war with the Almutians, who are treacherous murderers, and are also called Mulids. The Tatars fought with them: Chormaghon, Chaghat'a, Iosur and Bicho – in the summer as well as in winter, all the year round. And the Georgians, divided and distributed according to their duties, accompanied them in their campaigns; and then others set out in compliance with their lot and spent one year in Almut, and then still others were called on, as was their lot. So during the whole seven years their participation in the Almut war continued.

One day the Almutians sent one skillful Mulid (to the Tatars). Stealthily he slipped among the guardians of the *noin* Chaghat'a, stole into his tent, stuck his knife in Chaghat'a's heart while he was asleep and killed him; and nobody realized anything. In the morning, at dawn, the tent guards found the murdered *noin* Chaghat'a and started crying, moaning and grieving. The soldiers of *noin* Chaghat'a came running in and what they saw was the dead Chaghat'a, and nobody knew who had killed him.

They said: "The Georgians are now in a difficult condition, because of us Mongols; he was certainly killed by them in revenge for that." And everybody agreed, with the exception of the *noin* Chormaghon. He said: "Calm down, the Georgians are not murderers, and their faith does not encourage such deeds." But the Tatars revolted, and enraged by the death of their master, advanced towards the Georgian camp, for that camp was situated close to (the tent of) Chaghat'a. And as soon as the Tatars addressed them, the Georgians felt dismay and prostration, not knowing what to do. And some began to prepare for a fight, while the others remained perplexed, for they were too few in number. Then Grigol of Surami, the *eristavi* of Kartli said: "It's not the best time for a battle, for we are in minority. If we give battle they will kill us all, but if we forbear from fighting, they will kill only the men of high rank. And it seems to me, that it would be better if they had killed just us and not the whole army. We must set our hopes upon our Lord, for there is no other deliverer of ours besides Jesus Christ, the Son of God and His Holy Mother, ever Virgin Mary, who is the eternal protector of

those who set their hopes on Her Son, and especially of us Christians. Now, let each of us kneel three times and implore the Holy Mother, and let those who know (how to do it) render homage to Her and say: "Open the gates of grace, the blessed Mother of God" and so on."

And as they performed that thanksgiving prayer and gave glory to the Holy Mother and the barbarians approached them with the intention of killing them all, a man came out of the reeds with a drawn sword in his hand smeared with blood. He raised his sword in the air and cried loudly: "Man kushtem Chaghat'a," which in the Persian language means: "I killed Chaghat'a."

When the Tatars saw him, they rushed towards him at once, but he ran off into the reeds. The Tatars set the reeds on fire and the flames drove the man out. He was brought to the presence of Chormaghon, Iosur and Bicho. And they questioned him: how had he managed to kill *noin* Chaghat'a. And he told them: "I am a Mulid and a distinguished one. The chiefs of these Mulids gave me a lot of gold to kill one of the four of you. So I came here and killed *noin* Chaghat'a and made off." And they said: "What was then the reason of your coming out of the reeds and crying loudly of your killing the great *noin*, for you could have escaped?" And again the Mulid answered: "I entered these reeds and concealed myself. But suddenly a woman appeared before me of an exceptional charm, and she said to me: "What have you done? You have killed a man and then you ran away. And now because of you, too many lives will be destroyed and a lot of innocent ones will perish." And I said: "What should I do then, my Queen?" And she said: "Get up and stand by my side, and let us go, you will say that you killed that man, and in this way you will save a great number of lives from destruction." I got up instantly and stood at Her side, and She brought me here to you. And as I uttered my first words and you saw me, the woman disappeared, and I do not know who she was. And here I am, before you."

And the Tatars wondered on hearing the words of this man, and they cut him in two with a sword. In this way the Holy Mother of God saved her people, saved them from unjust death like she saved the great city of Constantinople when it was besieged by the savage barbarians headed by Savronis, from the evil designs of Khaghan, the fierce commander of the Scythians. The foes of the city were engulfed by the sea through (the prayers of) the devotees, for the sea boiled and melted the ship's resin and they sank into the deep sea with the aid of the Holy Mother of God, and a heavy shower poured down over the raiders, as happened in ancient times with the citizens of Sodom. No less a wonderful miracle took place now – the quick and sweeping deliverance of the Christians by the Holy Mother of God. But there is no one who can show adequate glorification for that miracle-worker which saved so great numbers of Georgian souls – the Word of immaculate Mother of God, who merged the Word and Human flesh, creating a perfect unity of two natures and two wills, otherwise incompatible.

The Georgians, though saved by such Purity, continued to be controlled by the Tatars, for they waged a ceaseless war against the Alamutians. Each *erismtavari* was appointed to one *noin*. Egarslan, a wonderful man, but devoid of the talents of a military commander, had risen so high that he was thinking of taking the title of a king; and all the Georgian families obeyed his will, (even) the most high-ranking and honest *mandat'urtukhutsesi* Shanshe, and Varam of Gaga, and all the *mtavaris*.

18. Other evils revealed themselves at this time. The Turks, who were located in Sham, learned that the Georgians were in a kingless state, and that Georgian troops had left their country at the command of the Tatars, and were focused on other matters. The Turks gathered in great numbers, about sixty thousand men, whose head and master was a distinguished man by the name of Q'ara-khan. They advanced with the object of ravaging Georgia and reached the lands of Valashk'ert, which at that time had been seized by Shanshe, and began plundering these lands and the lands behind Raḥs and up to Surman, which were almost won by the *mandat'urtukhutsesi* Shanshe. When the later saw all that, he called his people and *atabag* Ivane, and gathered about thirty thousand horsemen by his side. They went to Raḥs and arrived at Valashk'ert, where Q'ara-khan had set up his camp. 5 10

As they approached, they lined up in rows and fell upon the enemy; and the first among them was Shanshe, who struck down a noble Turk with his spear. A fierce battle took place, and a great number of Turks were slain, while Shanshe's men were well protected by the True Power on which he had set his hopes.

And the battle intensified, and Q'ara-khan was overpowered and his people were routed. They pursued them all the way down to Khlat, and slew and captured them in great numbers; and they replenished their own resources with the enemy's horses, mules and camels, tents and tabernacles, acquiring immeasurable spoil. Glorious and victorious they returned to Anisi. 15

However, the tidings that Georgia remained kingless spread far and wide, and kings of all tribes came to Georgia for plunder. At that time Sultan Ezinka and the Turks who were in Greece together with the emirs of other cities, gathered an innumerable army and set out for Georgia. Hearing of this, the population of T'ao, Shavshet-K'larjeti and K'ola-Art'aani-K'arnipor was seized by horror; they sent a messenger to Q'uarq'uaṛe Jaq'eli of Tsikhis-jvari in Samtskhe, asking for his help. And he summoned all the Meskhan *eristavis* and *tadzreulis* and gathered about ten thousand horsemen; and they took to the field. The Turks were there already, besieging Bana, for Oltisi and Bughataq'uri belonged to them already; they devastated T'ao. Q'uarq'uaṛe became commander of the Meskhan army, and they advanced to the approaches of K'almakhi. Learning of the coming of the Meskhis, the Turks, under the command of Altu-khan and On-khan, took up arms. From there the Meskhis descended to the plain which is called Avnisvak'e. They advanced towards each other, and a battle broke out, vigorous and fierce. The Greeks and Turks trusting in their superiority in numbers did not give in. And the Meskhis did not flee either, and guided by their courage they fought powerfully. One of the fighters, an *aznauri*, cleaved with his sword some Turk's head together with his helmet, and then struck in the back another of the On-khan's mighty soldiers, and cut him into pieces. And so the battle continued, and many people perished on both sides. Then the Greeks and Turks broke and fled. The Georgians seized captives and plunder in abundance, horses and mules, camels and tents, and all their goods; overfilled with goods and glory they returned to Samtskhe, and triumphant, for not one of the prominent people in their army had been killed. And this war was called the Bani Gathering, because it was not easy to accommodate so many spoils in Bani and Avnisvak'e. 20 25 30 35

After this was finished, the *eristavi*, *sp'asalar* of Samtskhe – Q'uarq'uaṛe – set out on a campaign with his two grandchildren: Ivane, who was also called P'ap'a, and the senior one, Sargis. The 40

brothers were mightier and braver than others, and fearless and steadfast in battle. And they fought with the Oltisians, and seized Oltisi and the fortress of Bughataq'uri, strongly fortified, which had endured many great wars. This is a true story.

19. At that troubled time in K'okht'astavi, all the *mtavaris* of Georgia, the Imiers and Amiers gathered: Egarslan, Tsot'ne Dadiani, Varam of Gaga, Q'uarq'uaire, K'up'ari Shota, Torgchai, the Er-K'akhs, the Kartlians, Gamrek'eli from Tori, Sargis Tmogveli, the Meskhis, the T'aoians, and all of them asked: "What should we do? No Georgian of the royal family is left, who can take command and lead us to fight the Tatars. We are scattered and can offer no resistance to them, and they oppress us so savagely that every year we have to set out to Almut whenever there is any kind of threat; we cannot stand it any longer. Though we have no king, let us gather together and fight the Tatars." They agreed to make war on the Tatars, to gather in Kartli and then split up. And the distant residents – the Abkhazians, Tsot'ne Dadiani and Bediani, a positive man enjoying divine as well as worldly virtues, and the *eristavi* of Rach'a – all withdrew to their estates to make preparations.

Learning of the unification of the Georgians, the Tatars Bicho and Angurag set out, and came to K'okht'astavi.<sup>35</sup> They were met by the Georgian nobles. Their armies were disunited and they could offer no resistance to the Tatars. So they were sent to the country of Ani, to a place which is called Shirak'avan. When they came into the presence of the *noin* Chormaghon, he said: "What do all these military gatherings mean, if you are not thinking of separating from us?" But the Georgian leaders answered: "We gathered not to discuss separation but to discuss your affairs and determine our tribute" which was called "kharaj."

Hearing this but not quite believing it Chormaghon ordered to strip them, tie up and place naked in the square, in the full blaze of the sun; and in such a condition, they were interrogated every day about the reason for their meetings and the Tatars threatened the leaders with death if they did not tell the truth. But they continued to insist: "Our aim was the determination of our tribute." And so this continued for many days, because the Tatars did not believe them.

And when the fixed date of the meeting approached, Tsot'ne Dadiani came with his troops to the agreed place, which is called Rk'inis-jvari and is situated between Samtskhe and Ghado. But he was aggrieved immensely learning that those leaders had been sent to Anisi and put through such a trial. And he saw all that had happened as his personal humiliation. Dismissing his troops, he departed to Anisi accompanied by two men, ready to give up his life and keeping in mind the precepts of the Lord, who says: "There is no love superior to the one when a man gives up his life for his neighbor;" and so this man displayed a nobility worthy of glorification. He passed Samtskhe and Javakheti and came to Anisi.

Seeing the nobles with tied tied up hands sitting in the square and condemned to such a dishonorable death, Tsot'ne dismounted his horse, stripped off his clothes down to the skin, hung them up, tied up his own hands and sat beside the nobles. The Tatars were amazed and immediately informed the *noin*: "Tsot'ne Dadiani came escorted by two men; he took off his clothes, tied himself up, and sat beside the Georgians." Having heard of Tsot'ne, who had done such an amazing thing, the Tatars called him to the *noin*'s presence and asked him the reason for his arrival. And he told them: "Our gathering was to resolve definitively the problem of your *kharaj*, and to carry out your

orders, that was the reason for our meeting. Now you take us for evil-doers and that is why I appear before you: if questioning them you will find that they deserve to be executed, then I, too, have to die with them, for they have done nothing without me, though if they are left to live, I should be with them too." Hearing his words, the *noins* wondered at his nobility and said: "Because the Georgian people are valiant and tell no lies, and this man came from Abkhazia to give his life for his friends, he does not lie to us, for he would commit himself to death by doing so; so they are innocent. We have to set them free." And they said to Tsot'ne: "We thought that you Georgians were renegades, but now, when you display such obvious valor, we grant all you Georgians freedom, and we have faith in you." And they released all the nobles. 5

20. The Georgian *mtavaris* parted with one other, but plunged into internecine wars. Then the nobles of the kingdom gathered together; they decided to place at their head Egarslan, the descendant of an impeccable family. This was the reason for the gathering of the *mtavaris*: Shanshe, Varam of Gaga, Q'uarq'uaire Jaq'eli, Sargis of Tmogvi, an experienced man, a philosopher and rhetorician; Grigol Surameli, the *eristavi* of Kartli; Gamrek'eli of Tori; Orbeli, and many *erismtavaris*. They began to search for David, the son of Lasha. They learned from one merchant that he was still alive, but was imprisoned in a deep well teeming with snakes. They went to Chormaghon, Iosur, Bicho and Angurag, for the Khan had not yet visited that country, but the *noins* were ruling it. They said (to the *noins*): "You sent our King, Narin David, to the Khan and we do not know what has happened to him; his mother, Rusudan, passed away and there are no other descendants of the royal family; we live in disagreement with each other; it would be wrong for us to obey anybody that does not belong to the royal family. But now we have learned that there is a son of our King Lasha, by the name of David, whom he entrusted to his sister Rusudan in order to elevate him to the throne, but Queen Rusudan sent him to Greece, to the Sultan, with the purpose of destroying him; we heard that he is alive, though the Sultan keeps him in prison. Now we implore you to send some artful man, bring back David and make him our King." 10 15 20 25

The *noins* marveled at what Queen Rusudan had done to her nephew. And they sent at once Angurag as an envoy and Varam of Gaga, and Sargis of Tmogvi with him. Not many days passed before they arrived in Greece to the Sultan, to whom they said: "We come here in search of David, call for him and we will take him with us." He was not supposed to be alive, and the Sultan said: "The Queen of Georgia sent us the boy David to send him into exile, and I did so a long time ago. Seven years have passed since then, and I do not know whether he is alive or dead." 30

But they said to him: "We know that he is alive, and is imprisoned in a well with snakes," for Sosana, having heard of their arrival, had met Varam and Sargis and informed them that David was alive. When the Sultan heard this, he sent a man who took David out of the well hardly breathing at all. To those, who saw him, he looked like a breathless body, or rather a living corpse; it was a strange sight, for his face was sallow, his hair reached his thighs and he had very long nails; the Sultan and Varam of Gaga wondered at seeing him and Sargis shed tears. The Sultan showed his tenderheartedness – he washed him and gave him many gifts: garments, choice horses, gold and silver, rendered him homage and asked for forgiveness; and then he let him go. When they entered Georgia, all the Georgian nobles came out to meet them: Shanshe and his son, *amirsp'asalar* 35 40

Zachariah, a man full of virtues, Q'uarq'uaire Jaq'eli, Grigol of Surami, Orbeliani, the *eristavi* of Kartli, Gamrek'eli, Shota K'up'ari and all the *mtavaris* with the exception of Egarslan.

And they went to the *noins*. The *noins* rejoiced at seeing him. They did not give the kingdom to him, but sent him to the great Khan Bato. And with him went the son of Shanshe, Zachariah,  
5 Aghbugha, son of Varam, and Sargis of Tmogvi. They set off to the Khan Bato.

When they arrived at Bato's, he kindly welcomed them; he retained the son of Shanshe, Zachariah and Aghbugha, and sent King David to Khan Mangu. He made Sargis of Tmogvi an escort for his journey to Q'araq'urum. They reached Khan Mangu, whom Bato asked to look into the affair and decide which one of the two Davids should receive the kingdom, and approve him.

10 Yet before their arrival Khan Mangu met King Narin David, *atabag* Avag, Surameli, Gurk'leli and *amirejib* Beshken. They spent a long time in Khat'aeti and Q'araq'urum. Then the Tatar *noins*, who were settled in Georgia, wished to see Sultan Q'iasdin, and sent envoys to him in haste. When they saw the Sultan with all kinds of riches, they wanted to present him to Khan Bato, and so they sent him there. Wherever they defeated some King, they sent him to Bato, and Sultan Q'iasdin they sent  
15 to Khan Mangu as well. So they remained there – both Davids, Q'iasdin, the Sultan of Greece, the Sultan of Khat and *atabag* Avag –they spent there about five years in Khat'aeti and Q'araq'urum.

21. At this time the following event occurred there. Mangu Khan had two sons: the elder, Q'ubil Khan, and the younger – Ulo,<sup>36</sup> who was also called Ejanobit. Mangu made his fist-born son – Q'ubil, a Khan, and ordered him to set out on a campaign to the West – against Babylon, that is Baghdad, Egypt and the whole of the West. And Ulo he ordered to make conquests in the great India. But to  
20 Khan Q'ubil the way to the West seemed difficult, and Ulo offered an exchange: Q'ubil Khan would go to India. Khan Q'ubil gladly accepted Ulo's proposal, and they exchanged the campaigns. And they informed Khan Mangu, their father, of the exchange of the campaigns that is, of the departure of Ulo to Babylon and Egypt. He gave his consent. Khan Mangu summoned his son Ulo to himself  
25 and gave him an army of about sixty thousand horsemen with all their households and livestock, and appointed by him as a chief commander – which was then called *ulus-noin* and now *beglarbeg* –the *noin* Elga, from the Jalair family, an honest and virtuous man. Ulo was assigned about a thousand soldiers. Ulo set out with his chief commander, *noin* Elga; they passed Turan and Jeon, reached the borders of Khorasan and then Almut.

30 Just as they started the war with Almut, Khan Mangu died. Khan Qubil was enthroned in his place, who was appointed Khan by his father. The two Davids remained in Q'araq'urum, because the Tatars had no time to occupy themselves with such matters.

Ulo approached Adarbadagan with the army, which numbered sixty thousand men. The *noins* Chormaghon, Iosur, Bicho and Angurag came out to meet him with all the dignitaries of Georgia and  
35 the first among them, Egarslan, to whom all the *mtavaris* of Georgia were obedient, as if he was king. They met in Adarbadagan. And both parties of the Tatars joined together – the ones who had been there formerly, who were called "Tamachs," and those who came with Khan Ulo.<sup>37</sup>

The Georgian dignitaries appeared before Ulo. He looked kindly upon them, welcomed them and armed them, assigning them as his allies; he appointed some of them to the rank of *uldachs*,  
40 which means sword-bearers, people who have swords and stay as guards at gates, others are

called *sukurchs*, which means that they bear refreshing folded circle, which they unfold when needed over the Khan's head on a high pole – the staff, and keep it in this way (cooling him) No one, who was not of the Khan's family, was allowed to hold it; others were made *q'ubchachs*, who were trusted with garment and footwear; others – *q'orchs* – arrow-bearers and quiver-bearers. These rare honors were rendered by the Khan to these high dignitaries of Georgia, and everyone of them was given an honorable rank. 5

They set out and arrived at a place called Alat'agh,<sup>38</sup> and all the Khan's subjects came to him. He sat on the king's throne,<sup>39</sup> and they prayed according to their custom, and his subjects acknowledged him as their Khan. And so begun Ulo's khandom over them.

At first the subject countries lived under these four *tamach noins*. Romgur, which is Khorasan, Iraq, Adarbadagan, Movak'an and Bardav, Shirvan, all of Georgia, Khlat and Greece right up to Asia, were ruled by these four *noins*. They governed these countries. Upon the death of Rimos, the country of Romos was ruled by four hypatoses. And when Ulo came, he managed the country, and governed it in accordance with his position as Khan. 10

At that time there came the other sons of the Khans as well, who are called by the name of "koun": Bato was T'utar, Urq'an, the son of Khan Chaghat'a, Balagh, the descendant of the Q'uli and Tuli families. So that the children of the Khans could take possession of the country and gather *kharaj*. And Ulo, grandson of Khan Okota, Q'ubil Khan's brother, met the *kouns* here. As soon as he saw these three *kouns*, Ulo welcomed them and gave each the country due to him; and so they lived in peace. 15 20

But the royal country, the throne, Mtskheta, and the adjoining lands and the monasteries remained unprotected by anybody, for the nobles of this country looked only after their own estates. And because of this Katholicos Nik'oloz went to present himself before Ulo. The Katholicos was a distinguished man, angelic, wonderful in all of his many undertakings, an orthodox man, the powerful and impartial expositor of kings and *mtavaris*, for he was pure and flattered nobody. Meeting with him the Khan wondered at his rank and his appearance, for he knew nothing of the Georgian people except the Arkuans. He rendered him homage and wrote for him a charter, which was an order. And they made and then gave him two golden crosses as a *shan*, and adorned them with precious stones and pearls, and granted one to him and the other to the father superior of Vardzia, who accompanied the Katholicos. And so honored, he (Ulo) sent him back, and he protected the churches and monasteries of Georgia. 25 30

22. And both – David and David – stayed with Khan Q'ubil and each thought of the kingdom for himself. Sargis of Tmogvi firmly opposed Narin David and those who were brought up with him, saying: "It is not proper for a woman's offspring to sit on the throne, which is a place of the son, an autocratic king – the son of a man." But they answered: "Though Narin David is a woman's offspring, the crown-bearing Rusudan was a Queen who had succeeded her brother Giorgi; for this reason Narin David is also a king." And while the discussions dragged on, they called upon *amirsp'asalar* Avag and gave him the sign of mercy, and a virgin of a noble appearance by the name of Eslom, descendant of a noble family, and sent him to Khan Ulo, hoping for a kind reception. And he appeared before the Khan, and the later showed him mercy and sent him to Georgia, to his estates. 35 40

When the Georgians learned of the return of *amirsp'asalar* Avag, all sorts of chiefs and dignitaries went out to meet him, and with them Shanshe and Egarslan, who had almost the rank of king. When Avag approached him, he thought that Egarslan would dismount his horse and so would meet him. But he gave himself airs and did not deign to treat Avag according to his rank and give him a kiss. Seeing that, Avag became angry, and lashed him upon the head with his whip, and ordered his subordinates to drag him dishonorably down from his horse, which order they obediently carried out.

Now we have to recall our previous words. There were disputes between the kings, and Khan Q'ubil did not know to whom the kingdom should belong, and they remained in Q'araq'urum for many years. And Sultan Q'iasdin and the Khlatian were sent with Avag. They arrived at their Royal House. And while the two kings stayed in Q'araq'urum and Khat'aeti, and procrastinated, the Khan Q'ubil decided to send them to his brother Ulo. He informed him, that, if he wished to, he could give the kingdom to both, precisely what Ulo subsequently did. And so they came, and he beheld them and welcomed, and approved the reign for both, granting them a whole kingdom.

When the Georgians learned of the arrival of the two Kings, they rejoiced immensely; the high-ranking Imiers and Amiers came out to meet them in Alat'agh, and there was joy and thanksgiving to God. Keeping them for a while, Khan Ulo finally let them leave for Kartli. They came to Tbilisi, delighted. And all the *ep'isk'op'oses*, *mtavaris* and *eristavis* gathered around the Katholicos, and David and David – together mounted the throne of their forefathers in Tbilisi. But other views have also reached us, which were related by other witnesses of the events, claiming that during the sojourn of the Kings in Q'araq'urum, Khan Guiuk decided to give the kingdom to the son of Lasha and sent him back with that promise, and that the son of Rusudan fled the same night and came to Abkhazia.<sup>40</sup> But I do not believe it. And you must know first of all that Khan Guiuk had not separated them, and that neither Khan Mangu, Q'ubil's father, nor Ulo did that either, and the kingdom was given to both of them by the son of Khan Mangu – Khan Q'ubil, who then presented them to Khan Ulo, and the latter sanctioned their joint possession of the kingdom.

#### IV

23. Both Kings sat on the throne, and there are many charters that prove this. I personally saw one, at the head of which was written: "The Kings Bagrat'ians" and "By the will of God David and David," signed by both, and "Sanctioned by me, David, and by me, David, also sanctioned." Both sat firmly on the throne, as I have already said. This makes the story of the love of Shanshe for the son of Lasha, and the adherence of Avag to David, the son of Rusudan, doubtful. But they did not profess any of this openly, for the relations of David with David were of trusting love and they did not lapse into confrontation. And they were obedient to Khan Ulo and paid him *kharaj*. And the priority in honor and superiority was to the son of Lasha, for the reason of his being the son of Lasha as well as his seniority.

The Tatars did not give up their destruction and devastation of other peoples, but the Georgians were kept as allies in their campaigns, because of their courage; and for this reason the Kings and *mtavaris* were under great stress. Knowing no rest the Tatars fought with disobedient nations and especially with the citizens of Almut. And because this war continued for seven years, Ulo also sent the *noins* as well as King David, the son of Giorgi, and the Georgian army to fight against Almut. The Almutians, learning of this, and tired by the war and thoroughly exhausted, fled to Egypt (Misr), taking with them their households, their livestock and all their possessions. The Sultan of Misr settled them there. And now every *mulid* coming from Misr is one of those Almutians who had settled there. 5

And so having command over Almut and the whole of Khorasan, Ulo started to fight all the other disobedient tribes, and destroyed so many people, that at any place where they camped, they could stay (only) twelve days, because the place started stinking due to all the corpses. Most of all he killed the Persians, for he thought that the Muslim faith was disgusting and he had the right to judge them. 10

Both Kings – David and David – lived permanently at Ulo's side. And David, son of Lasha was tall, stately and portly, a skillful archer, innocent, honest, trustful and full of forgiveness for the evil-minded. And the son of Rusudan, David, was of an average height and lean, good-looking, of clear complexion and with thin hair, light-footed, an excellent and lucky hunter, smooth-spoken and loquacious, generous and gentle, a brave rider, clever in campaigns and a believer in justice, and in particular – a hard worker. Most of the time they were living with Khan Ulo. Ulo conceived an affection towards the son of Lasha – David, and held David, son of Rusudan, in contempt. And when the son of Rusudan was with Khan Ulo in Alat'agh, he was seized and brought to the wintering place of the Tatars at Bardav. When they approached Nakhchevan, David, the son of Rusudan escaped to Abkhazia and took three men with him, notably, Gurk'leli, Amirejib, and Bega of Surami, whom the Tatars called Salin-Beg, which means kind Beg. They departed to Abkhazia, and the son of Lasha was at that time in Tbilisi. When Narin David reached the estates of *atabag* Avag in his simple dress, Sumbat' Orbeli, who was hunting there at that time, saw him. 15 20 25

At the time of destruction of the Orbeli family by the King, one of them, by the name of Lip'arit', fled to Nakhchevan. He reached the estates of Eligun. And Eligun beholding Lip'arit' Orbeli, introduced him to his house as a fiancé and married his daughter to him, who gave birth to two sons, who were given the names, Eligun and Sumbat'. And the senior Eligun adopted Sumbat'. And the grandson of this Sumbat' – also Sumbat', came across David and brought him to his home. David implored Sumbat' not to report him, but sent him to Abkhazia, and gave him the precious stone that had been given to him by his mother Rusudan. And due to their fear of the Tatars, David came to Abkhazia in beggarly dress. He reached Tori, the estates of Lip'arit' of Tori, who was also called "Dragon's ears." He gave him a horse and dress and escorted him to Kutaisi. Learning of this, the Abkhazians, Suans, Dadianis, Bedianis, the *eristavi* of Rach'a and the Likh-Imerelis, gathered together in a great joy and made David the King of the Abkhazians up to Likhi. 30 35

And so the kingdom became divided into two principalities, though both Davids continued to live in mutual love as before. The lands on this side of Likhi remained in possession of David, the son of Lasha, and the ones on the other side of Likhi belonged to the son of Rusudan. And the entire 40

country settled down and gained in riches immeasurably, and the royal house ruled well and served the Khan.

5 Then the great Khan Bato, who owned Q'ivchaq'ia and Ovseti, Khazaria, Russia, Bulgaria down to Serbia, Daruband and Khat'aeti, sent an envoy to King David summoning him. And King David went to Bato with great presents, charging Queen Jigda-Khatun<sup>41</sup> and her guest Jikur<sup>42</sup> with the management of his House, for Jikur was devoted to the Kings with all his heart, more than any other man. There was no thief or robber left in the whole kingdom, and if they happened to appear anywhere they were hung on a tree. As a reward for his devotion, King David charged him with the government of the kingdom and left him in Tbilisi at the Queen's side. Jikur built Isani palace displaying great sense, and he made the Pkhovelis the King's tributaries, and turned these people of savage habits into mule-keepers.

10 The King went to Bato, who received him with honor and fulfilled all his wishes. And the King remained with Bato for a long time. The King assigned one man to every district, so for K'akheti, he appointed Torghva of P'ank'isi and ordered him to obey the will of the Queen. Torghva thinking that the King would not come back, had withdrawn to P'ank'isi fortress, appropriated K'akheti, and refused to obey the Queen and her guest Jikur.

15 Then the Khan showing his generosity towards King David presented him with a punkah, which nobody had a right to own with the exception of the Khan himself and his relatives. And he notified Ulo that no one, except perhaps the *noin* of Ulus, should be allowed to occupy a position in front of the King upon entering the Horde, for such was the rule of the Tatars. Nobody had the right to sit before a Khan, not even when sharing a meal with him. And so he honored the King and sent him to the kingdom of Kartli. When he reached Hereti, all the grandees of his kingdom came out to meet him. And Torghva, frightened, retreated to P'ank'isi. The King entered Tbilisi, and the whole population of Georgia rejoiced. King David called for Torghva, but he did not come to the King's court, as he was afraid of the King. And many times he called for him, but he could not summon the courage to appear before the King. Then following the advice of Jikur, the ruler of Khornabuji came to Torghva to win his confidence, giving him a firm oath. And Torghva told him: "Let's go to Alaverdi to Saint George and there give me your oath and your promise." They went there together, and Torghva pressed himself against the edge of the robe of the Martyr of Alaverdi. The Khornabujian, too, came and swore on the hem of the robe. And Torghva told him: "Let Saint George repay you for what you will do to me, for I am single and with my death my estate will be left without successor; let the Saint Martyr leave your home without successor as well." And the Khornabujian, who was bound by a firm oath, took him to T'abakhmela, but he ignored all entreaties as well as his own oath. Jikur, subject to the intrigues of the Queen, seized him, without the King's knowledge, brought him to K'idek'ari and dropped him there from a high cliff.

30 And how the Khormabujian was repaid for his perjury and disregard of Torghva's entreaties, you may judge for yourself, for he had a son by the name of Shalva, full of goodness. This Shalva had children, who died very soon; and the old man, too, died from grief; and we heard much of the emptiness of his house. And only his son, Shalva, remained, who in the end was killed by the Tatars. His home was turned desolate. That is how the Martyr of Alaverdi had avenged him.

Settling all the affairs in his kingdom, King David appeared before Khan Ulo with great gifts, and the Khan welcomed him with respect and granted him the privilege of sitting among the first ranks, the *noins*, judging and counseling equally with them.

24. At that time Khan Ulo decided to start a campaign against Babylon, or Baghdad, and its king – the *Caliph*. He summoned his whole army and set out for Baghdad. He came to Babylon and the *Caliph*, unable to offer any resistance, hid in Baghdad. The Khan surrounded the city and laid siege to it. From one side of the river the Khan himself attacked the city, from the other – *noin* Elga, and from yet another – King David. All the distinguished nobles of Georgia were there with him. And they fought mightily, but only for a few days, for in twelve days Baghdad had fallen.

King David ordered his soldiers to dig a tunnel under the city wall. They did so, and the Georgians entered the city. A fierce fight took place, and they slayed the Baghdadian soldiers; mortal fear seized the citizens. The Georgians opened the city gates and the Tatars entered. Learning that the Tatars entered the city, the *Caliph* embarked a ship and fled by the river, which flows through the city. Catching sight of him, *noin* Elga, who was on the other side of the river, rushed after him. Seeing that he could not escape, the *Caliph* returned to his palace. And so this famous city was captured so easily, but what about the trials and calamities that fell to the lot of the people of Baghdad? So many of them were slain with swords, not a man could count the number; the city districts, the streets and the houses were filled with corpses. And who could tell how much spoil and plunder was taken? For the Tatars and the Georgians took an immense amount of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, clothes and garments, gold and silver vessels, so that nobody took anything besides the gold and silver, precious stones, cloths and garments. Vessels produced in China and Kashan and brought from there, tough-pitch copper and iron had lain there without anyone noticing them. The soldiers loaded themselves up, and packed their saddles, k'urdans and other cheap vessels with precious stones, pearls, and pure gold, some breaking off the handles of their swords, filled up the sheaths with gold and secured them with the broken handles. Some disemboweled the corpses of the dead Baghdadians and filled them up with gold and precious stones and under the guise of their own dead, took them out of the city. And so they plundered, destroyed and took captives.

They broke in into the *Caliph's* palace and took the *Caliph* and his son and all his treasures and presented them to Khan Ulo. When the *Caliph* appeared before the Khan they told him to bow before him, but he did not concede, saying: "I am an autocratic King, and have never been submissive to anybody. If you let me go, I will resign to it, if not – I will die submissive to nobody." But they urged him to bow and knocked him down, and he fell on his back, but still did not bow. And (Khulagu) ordered them to take him out, escorted by *noin* Elga in order to put him and his son to death. Then he told the *Caliph* that the Khan had spared him, and they rejoiced. The *Caliph* said: "If he is going to spare me, let him release me and give me Babylon." But *noin* Elga told him: "No, the Khan will kill you himself with his own sword, and the son of the Khan, Abagi, will kill your son." And (the *Caliph*) said in amazement: "If I must be executed, it is of no difference whether the executioner is a dog or a man." So the *Caliph* was executed, along with his entire household. But the Khan showed mercy to the remaining Baghdadians, and ordered reconstruction, and they scattered coins from the icons. And so enriched by the captives and with spoil, they returned to their camp.

At that time, the following happened: Khan Bato, who was the greatest among the Khans, decided to take a census of all his subject countries.<sup>43</sup> He found a man of the Oirad kin, by the name of Arghun, a law-maker and just-spoken, a profound and judicious man. And he sent him on a tour of the whole of his empire – Russia, Khazaria, Ovseti, Q'ivchaq'ia, down to the Dark, and in the east  
5 down to China and Khat'aeti, – to determine how many horsemen and soldiers were able to take part in campaigns with the *noins*, great and minor, according to their *ulupa*, which consists of aid to travelers, and the cost of horses and their loading. After enumerating everything in the imperial domains, Bato sent him to Q'araq'urum to Khan Q'ubil, so that he could do the same there with the help of Arghun. And Khan Q'ubil did as he was proposed; he sent Arghun around his lands to  
10 introduce the order. And Arghun established order as he had done it for Bato. Chaghat'a and Urq'an appeared before the Khan. And he rendered them assistance and brought order to Turan and settled all the affairs there. Then he crossed Jeon, and came to Khorasan, Iraq and Romgur and did the same there too.

Then Arghun came to Khan Ulo, who welcomed him with honors and sent him to Georgia,  
15 to King David, and to Greece, and all the other lands subject to him, and he took a census and regulated the problems of government. When he came to Georgia, the whole population of David's kingdom was in great distress. And lists of everything were made, starting with people and ending with beasts, from fields to vineyards, and from orchards to vegetable gardens. And from every nine well-off peasants they took one for military service. David's Kingdom had to render nine *dumans* of  
20 horsemen to accompany the Tatars, which made up nine *bevrís*. And the the size of the tribute was established; from one village for the commander of a thousand horsemen, they took one lamb and one *drahk'an*, and for the commander of a *bevri* – one sheep and two *drahk'ans*, and the fee for a horse was three *tetris* daily. Ordering things in such a way, Arghun left for Greece and Baghdad. After settling the affairs of four Khandoms, Arghun was satisfied with his work, for he was a lawmaker. He  
25 excluded the houses of priests and monks and the churches from duties, and the *q'alan*; he freed sheikhs, dervishes and the people of any faith who remained in God's service.

At that time Khan Ulo decided to advance into Egypt and called on the Georgian King with all his army, and made war with the Sultan. They reached Mesopotamia and Sham. The Sultan of Egypt armed himself to offer resistance to the Tatars and advanced to the river Euphrates with  
30 all his horsemen. The Tatars crossed the river, for the Sultan had not yet reached its banks. And they engaged in battle. The Sultan stood in the front line, and a great struggle took place, in which King David and his soldiers fought mightily in the leading ranks. Many fell on both sides, and the Egyptians fled, and many of the Sultan's soldiers died. The Khan set up a camp on the riverbank and stayed for a long time. He saw a small, though strongly reinforced town on the bank, which was  
35 upon a rock; from the other side it was protected by the river Euphrates. When the Khan became aware of the firm defenses of the town and realized it was impossible for him to seize it in a battle, he thought up a wonderful ruse. He told the soldiers camped under it: "There is no way of taking the town. I order you to advance, lay siege to the town and start growling and howling like dogs." Hearing that the soldiers were amazed, though they mounted their horses and started to growl like  
40 dogs. When the sound reached the town a miraculous thing happened; the town split in two parts,

one part fell from the rock into the river and countless people perished. The Khan seized the rest of the town and advanced to Sham and Mesopotamia. And all the population of Mesopotamia and Sham came out to meet him, bearing gifts in abundance.

25. King David and the Georgians left the Khan, in order to return home, for they had been campaigning a long time. Khan Ulo gave them their freedom and they made their way back home. Enriched and filled with immeasurable gifts and spoils, King David and the Georgians came to Adarbadagan, and from there, full of joy, marched to Tbilisi.

At this time, the nobles of the royal court were seized by grief, for Jigda did not bear a child. The King decided to take a woman by the name of Altun from the tribe of the Ovses in order to beget a child, promising that if she bore him a son, he would not force her to stay, but would send her back home. After some time Altun became pregnant and gave birth to a son, who was given the name of Giorgi, and Queen Jigda-Khatun took him in and adopted him as her son. A little time later she became pregnant and bore a daughter, who was named Tamar. And the King sent his lover Altun away, who was Ossetian and very attractive. In a little while, Queen Jigda-Khatun died and they took her to the burial place of the Queens at Mtskheta and buried her there.

King David departed for Mughan to Khan Ulo, where the Tatars had their winter camp. David accompanied Khan Ulo to the Tatar's summer camp, and from there Ulo sent the King to Kartli, so that he could prepare himself for a campaign in Egypt,<sup>44</sup> which is Misreti. David visited the estates of *atabag* Avag, the son of *atabag* Ivane. This was the time when Avag passed away, leaving no son behind, but only a daughter by the name of Khuashak. The King came to the funeral in Bijnisi and noticed the good-looking widow of Avag of the K'akhaber family, the daughter of the *eristavi* of Rach'a, by the name of Gvantsa. He fell in love with her and a little time later took her as his wife and Queen, and brought her to his kingdom. And he left Avag's daughter to govern her estate, entrusting her to the supervision of Sadun of Mank'aberdi, who was a wise and reasonable man, well intentioned, handsome, quick, stately, an excellent wrestler of outstanding strength, and an artful archer. He appeared before Ulo, bowed to him and folding his hands said: "The Lord has granted you victories over all your enemies and distinguished you among all the people, and now one hundred thousand horsemen are present here, though I am ready to contend with any of them, be it wrestling or shooting." And no such man was found who dared to accept the challenge, and so he came out victorious. He became a favorite of Khan Ulo and from that time his advancement began. King David respected him for his reasoning power and charged him with the patronage of the house of Avag. And Queen Gvantsa conceived and gave birth to a boy, naming him Dimit'ri, who became king after David, to which the following words will testify.

The reign of Gvantsa was hard for the guest Jikur, for they were enemies. As a result, due to the evil designs of Sumbat' Orbeli, the King was persuaded that Jikur was going to send his people to Arghun to inform Khan Ulo of the wealth of the King, and of his plans of treachery". The King, being innocent – and an innocent man believes everything – sent his people out to bring Jikur to him, and to ravage his house. And the King's servants carried out his order and brought Jikur in the night to the King's presence, for the King was at Isani and was observing the river Mt'k'vari from above. But the King exchanged no word with him, and without examination of any kind ordered

to throw him down into the river. Seeing in the morning Jikur's body stranded on the sandy bank, people wondered at his sudden death; there was nobody to bury him, for he had no children. All the wretches, orphans and widows gathered together and implored the King to give them the remains of Jikur, for he had done them much good. David heeded their request and gave them his body; they took Jikur with great lamentations to the Church of Saint Virgin Christina, which, destroyed by the Khoresmians, was built anew, and buried him there with great honors, as much it was within the powers of the wretched to do so.

After this, the Khan decided to arm himself against the Sultan of Misreti and summoned all his chiefs and soldiers, and called upon David and his army to march to Egypt. But King David as well as his country were constrained by the census of Arghun, which obliged David to put aside for the Khan three *tetris* from every hundred earned in Tbilisi. Besides the Khan had installed in Tbilisi Khoja-Aziz, a Persian by race and faith, who was so impudent that he had established a *kharaj*, which they call *t'amgha*, on the purchase of a sheep or lambs for the King's kitchen. Pressured by these circumstances, the King reasoned: "Should I go to Egypt or rather break with the Khan? – or could I decide on neither of these options." However, he left for the campaign, but on reaching the lands of Javakheti decided to break with the Khan. Summoning his counselors he told them: "Let those who desire it leave their domains and come with me. If somebody disagrees, let him serve the Khan and go to Misr, to defend his empire. And let the will of every man be his own, but I have no desire to serve the Tatars, because of the injustice of Khoja-Aziz, who was set above me by Arghun. I will stand no such disgrace." Some of the nobles supported him, while others did not, though he resolved to depart for home in any case. But most of them went to the Khan: Ivane, son of Shanshe, Grigol of Surami, K'akha from Tori, the *eristavi* of Akhalkalaki; the principal ones among them went to the Khan, and most of the Er-K'akhs.

Seeing that the nobles joined the Khan, the King nevertheless broke with him and proposed Sargis Jaq'eli from Tsikhis-jvari, who had the rank of the *amirsp'asalar* of Samtskhe, to follow his example and break with the Khan too. Sargis conceded, and brought the King to Samtskhe, quartered him in his house, and kept him in great honor, exceeding everything that was considered due for a royal family by custom. He offered to submit all his city-fortresses and estates for maintaining the King and his army, though the King did not take advantage of this proposal. The King remained with him for much of the summer, and a thorough accord was established between them. They dwelt in Samtskhe. Queen Gvantsa and her little son Dimit'ri, he left at the house of Avag in Bijnisi.

26. Ulo returned victorious from his war against the Sultan of Egypt, whom he defeated and put to flight; and the Georgians, who were with him, fought mightily. He returned to his summer camp of Alat'agh, and from there he went to Siaka, and then to his winter camp, which is now called Q'arabagh and Mughan. There he asked about the affairs of David and learned of his dissent. He called Arghun and two hundred of his chiefs (*mtavaris*) and appointed Arghun their commander. Then he gave him twenty thousand horsemen and ordered those of the Georgians, who remained his subjects, to accompany Arghun Oirad to Samtskhe and make war with the King. Arghun set out with twenty thousand horsemen, passed Ganja and Somkhiti and approached Tbilisi. Here he was joined by the above mentioned nobles of Georgia, and they set off for Samtskhe to wage war with

the King. Learning of the approach of Arghun and all the nobles of Kartli, King David summoned his people – about eight thousand horsemen – assigned as commander Sargis Jaq’eli, a brave and manly man tested many times in glorious battles, stately, an artful fighter on horseback, an excellent shooter with a great aim, and perfect in hunting game. The King relied on him, and his loyalty to the King was great. The King sent him to fight Arghun; they advanced but stayed in the gorges. Arghun crossed Kartli and halted in Surami. He sent forward his vanguard – six thousand horsemen. Arghun was camped at Shindara, while his vanguard went to T’asisk’ari and camped in the basin of the river, which is Shola. Sargis advanced towards the valleys and sent forward one thousand five hundred horsemen, chosen and experienced in battles. They did not know of the approach of Arghun. And they marched forward and crossed the bridge of Akhaldaba. It was a cold winter as it is normally in December. The Georgian vanguard came out of the gorge and saw the detachment of the Tatars; the Georgians prepared for a battle. The Meskhis rushed forward and in the very first engagement put the Tatars to flight, and slew many distinguished ones among them. And the Meskhis fought so mightily that only a few of the enemy could escape, taking shelter among Arghun’s troops on the hill of Shindara. The Meskhis pursued them and slew them with their swords, not waiting for the coming of their commander, Sargis, and the King’s army and Tatar troops were close. With glorious victory, they returned with the heads of many distinguished Tatars, and joined Sargis and the main army. Sargis rejoiced, seeing their safe return and their exultation, though it was hard for him to admit, as he did not take part in the battle. He decided to line up the Meskhis again, and inspired by his valiant heart, they marched against Arghun. Seeing the advance of the Georgian army, Arghun, who had called up his troops, took to flight again, but now the noble Georgians, under the command of K’akha from Tori, did not allow him to flee. K’akha said to him: “We, Georgians, are skillful in wars and will fight them in your place.” And so they pursued Arghun, though with difficulty. And again Arghun drew up his horsemen. And they approached each other, and the daring Meskhis rushed at the enemy. Sargis Jaq’eli was the first to meet the Tatars, and with his spear brought down from his horse the bravest of them – Chinbaadur. A fierce battle took place, and many followers of Arghun were slain, and took to flight. The first line of the King’s army overpowered (the enemy), though as is the custom among the Tatars – they retreated and then turned about suddenly. The King’s faint-hearted soldiers took instantly to flight. And so fleeing they scattered, and they were slain by the Tatars. The Lord doomed them for so many of our sins, giving them up to the hands of heathens. And the heathens mercilessly destroyed them, and killed many noble Georgians, and only a few survived. They were pursued down to the bridge of Akhaldaba, and even further. And some were taken captive – Gurk’eli Murvan and many others.

Arghun victorious presented himself before Khan Ulo, while Sargis and the Meskhis came before the King in Ats’q’uri, lamenting their friends, for most of them were slain and only a few remained alive.

The King spent half of the winter in Samtskhe, then moved to Shavsheti and K’larjeti, and then departed for Nigaliskhevi. As May came, and grass covered the meadows, the Khan, again, sent Arghun, together with the Georgians that were allied with him, in pursuit of the King. They came to Samtskhe in June. Some of the Meskhis came out to meet Arghun, but some joined the King.

And then Arghun occupied and devastated Samtskhe; he approached Tsikhis-jvari and attacked it fiercely, for it was not surrounded by a strong wall. The defenders of the fortress fought vigorously and destroyed many attackers and harassed them, making sallies day and night, eliminating the enemy at many places. Seeing the firmness of Tsikhis-jvari, which means the fortress of the Cross, Arghun raised the siege and departed. He received a letter from the Khan, who urged him to return, because the Khan, at war with the country of Turan, was approaching Khorasan. In this way the Lord protected the country of Samtskhe from disaster, for Arghun had been in Samtskhe for twenty days at most.

And King David came back to Shavsheti and Samtskhe and, seeing Samtskhe so devastated, he called his counselors and asked them, what should he do, for it was impossible for him to fight the Tatars. And then Sargis Jaq'eli of Tsikhis-jvari said: "Samtskhe is small and inconvenient for the stationing of a king's camp. My advice to you would be to go to Likht-Imeriti where David, Rusudan's son lives, for both of you are owners of the entire Kingdom, of this part as well as of the other. As for me, I put myself in your hands, with all my belongings and my army; make use of them at your own discretion. And if your stay with David is favorable, it will be good, and if not, than here is my wealth at your disposal. And you, too, do not spare your wealth; let us negotiate with the *tavadis* of Imeri and give them some of our treasures, and so draw them to our side."

David listened to his advice and sent an envoy to the son of Rusudan, with a request for shelter, as he was fleeing from the Tatars. The latter promised to do so. King David departed and came to Kutaisi where he was met by the son of Rusudan, who kindly received him; they spent one year together. That the son of Rusudan received him so warmly was not surprising, for it was only proper to treat the son of Lasha this way; but David walked among them like a stranger.

Then, conferring between themselves, the *eristavi* of Rach'a, K'akhaber, son of K'akhaber, the sons of Kvabuli, Parjanian Sargis, decided to make the son of Lasha – David, whom they preferred – the King. This split Likht-Imeriti: some supported the son of Lasha, and some the son of Rusudan. Dadian-Bediani, son of Juansher, remained loyal to the son of Rusudan, for this Bediani was a man with high morals, generous as no other man, and extremely reasonable. He brought order to Odishi, where it was impossible to find a thief or a villain any more. And the Svans, too, divided into two. But both, David and David, did not harm each other; and the troops did not obey them, for neither of the two was handing out allowances to them. Such was the disorder that seized Imeri, producing a lot of trouble.

Unable to stand it any more, they decided to divide the Kingdom and the treasury in two. Identifying the principalities of the kingdom, they divided the territory into Tbilisi and Kutaisi; and all the *tavadis* and *eristavis* from Nik'opsia and up to Daruband they divided in two equal parts.<sup>45</sup> They divided the royal treasury, but shared between themselves only a small part of the treasure kept in Khuamli cave, leaving most of it there. And the specially forged chain, the noble stone, the anvil and the pearls of a size that no eye of a man has ever seen, all of them went to the son of Rusudan. So the division of the kingdom took place, and from that time on – two kingdoms came into being. And the lands of this side of Georgia were left without a king; there was no campaigning with the Tatars any more, or serving them.

27. Then the Khan decided to make an alliance with the King. He called Arghun and ordered him to send an envoy to the King for the purpose of establishing an alliance, promising security by oath. Queen Gvantsa, Avag's widow, and her little son, were taken to the Horde, and remained in the hands of Ulo, the latter thinking of doing some evil thing to the boy. Then the spouse of a *noin* adopted him, for she was childless. But they said also, that suckling the baby Dimit'ri, her womb opened, and she conceived and gave birth to a child – a son. For this reason the *noin*'s wife rendered favors to Gvantsa and her son. Arghun ordered to find a man, who would propose the alliance before the King. And an envoy was sent with the message containing the offer to give back to David the whole Kingdom and to restore all the initial royal honors. When the Khan's messengers appeared before the King and told him (of the Khan's proposal), he answered as follows: "The reason I broke from the kingdom was Khoja-Aziz. If the Khan deigns to settle relations with me, I will present to him my firstborn son, Giorgi, and let the Khan present to him my kingdom. And let him send to me Queen Gvantsa and my son, Dimit'ri, and deliver Khoja-Aziz over to me, so I can avenge him by putting him to death for all the harm he has caused me."

When the messengers returned and appeared before the Khan, he took favorably the King's words. And they called for his son, Giorgi, and gave him a firm promise on oath, which involved drinking from a gold vessel, that the Khan would protect the King's son and would give him his kingdom back. And if King David came to see Khan Ulo, who was also called Ejan, he would deliver Khoja-Aziz into the King's hands, and according to his desire, the King could put him to death or set him free. As a mediator in this affair, he took Eruk Arkuan, a man just and honest for he was faithfully devoted to the Cross of Christ. And Eruk asked the Khan not to harm David or his son Giorgi. Eruk came to the King took an oath and departed taking with him David's son Giorgi. They entered Tbilisi and all the *mtavaris* and *eristavis* of Georgia came out to meet them, and Shadin with them, an Armenian by birth, to whom Arghun presented Tbilisi and the entire Kingdom. He presented Giorgi with gifts without number. They spent a little time in the city and then departed to Erjan and reached the Horde. First he presented Giorgi to Erjan's wife, T'onghuz-Khatun, for she was the daughter of the great King of Constantinople, Christian by faith and orthodox. And for that reason T'onghuz-Khatun rendered homage to Eruk Arkuan, for he also was a Christian. As soon as she had seen the boy, she felt a fondness for him, because of his virtues, herself being filled with grace. Then he was presented to the Khan, and he kindly welcomed him and rendered him great homage. And enjoying such honors he spent one year there and the Khan granted him his whole Kingdom. He sent an envoy in order to present King David to Ejan, but the King continued to be fastidious, because they had not delivered Khoja-Aziz to him: "If you do not give him to me with a right to execute him, I will not come to the Horde." Learning of this from Arghun, the Khan got angry, for the thought of execution of Khoja-Aziz depressed him. Arghun told the Khan: "The King will not come here and put himself at your service, he just pacifies you by this lie. My advice to you will be to kill the King's son at once, and send me over there to make war with him. I will bring him bound to you."

The Khan believed him and assigned assassins to kill the King's son and all those who accompanied him.<sup>46</sup> Learning of this, Eruk Arkuan rushed immediately to T'onghuz-Khatun and told her of all that had been said. And she, in hurry, taking Eruk Arkuan with her, appeared before the

Khan and said: "Oh, Great and High Khan, what an unjust order you gave now – to kill the King's son and his attendants? Don't you know that he is a descendant of the glorious and noble family, of the prophets with whom the Lord communicated. And, as you are well aware, you took an oath to bring him up here. I and Eruk Arkuan would prefer to die, and lo, we will give our lives for the son of the King. And you must also know that your brother, the son of the great Khan, sends him envoys and presents with countless gifts in order to obtain his assistance for use of the passage of Darialan and Dvaleti, as both of them are in his hands. And I allow myself to give you an advice: why as the sake of one aged Persian merchant do you alienate the great King and put him in the hands of your enemies, for if *ulus* Bato and the King make an alliance they may produce great trouble."

Hearing this, Ulo wondered. He called immediately for Giorgi, showed him great honors and dressed him in excellent garments. And he told T'onghuz-Khatun and Eruk Arkuan: "Here, take on my oath the son of the King from me. I will render no harm to David, but show him only honors. And you, Eruk, take both children, sons of the King, Giorgi and Dimit'ri as well as Queen Gvantsa and do to them what T'onghuz-Khatun's and your wish is, and bring me David." Hearing this, they rejoiced, and bowing to him they said: "If you deliver us Khoja-Aziz and we do not bring David here, let our heads be our pledge. But if you do not give us Khoja-Aziz, David will not come." Though it was not easy for Arghun to give them Khoja-Aziz, he gave in, and Eruk took Khoja-Aziz with him. And T'onghuz-Khatun wrote a letter, with an oath to the King: "The Khan will not harm you in any way, if you come to the Horde, but will render you all kinds of honors and grant you the kingdom without the slightest detriment."

Eruk Arkuan set out and came to Tbilisi, and brought with him the King's both sons. He sent an envoy to the King and informed him of everything. And the King set out and came and camped at the edge of Kvishkheti in the centre of Surami, and summoned Eruk Arkuan. He came to the King and brought both his sons with him, and gave him the message with the oath, and delivered to him Khoja-Aziz. The moment the King set his eyes on him, he ordered his head cut off. And they cut off his head and sent it to Tbilisi, where they erected a pole and placed Khoja-Aziz's head on the top.

And so the King together with Eruk set out for the Horde. And the whole population of his kingdom saw him off. They departed. And Sargis Jaq'eli of Tsikhis-jvari accompanied him, an outstanding person, who also did a noble thing, for during the sojourn of the King in Tbilisi an envoy of the Khan came over and told them: "I vouch for the King, but not for P'ap'a Sargis." These words upset Sargis, and the King tried to persuade him to return, but he did not obey him: "Do not urge me to do such thing and turn back. For if for the sins of mine the Tatars harm you, every man will say that because of (the intrigues of) Sargis, the King parted with the Tatars and then Sargis returned home, sending the King to the Khan to meet his death. Heaven forbid, this will bring shame on my family. On the contrary, if they put me to death, let it be for you, and if I remain alive, I will remain with you." The King was so grateful for this that by a special charter, he granted him an estate with one community in Samtskhe and the church of T'beti in Shavsheti.

They set out for The Horde and appeared before Khan Ulo in Bardava, his winter camp; they did not know of his intentions. Some days later the Khan called the King and the *mtavaris* to a reception and asked the King the reason for his dissension. And everybody was expecting to hear the censure

of the King and his nobles, and everybody was praying to God and Met'ekhi Holy Mother of God to whose protection they entrusted their lives. And they appeared before the Khan and he gave them wine in a big golden bowl with his own hands, for such was the custom of Khans. And when the King sat with folded legs and all the *mtavaris* with him, the Khan asked him: "How dared you to dissent from me and oppose my edict and quarrel with Arghun? Is it not enough, what I have done for you? Lost and doomed, I dragged you out of the well, and saved you from the reptiles, and made you a King." And having nothing to say, the King looked over at Sargis Jaq'eli, as if he was the reason of the quarrel with Arghun and the beating of the Tatars.

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28. And Sargis, seeing the King growling like a lion ready to pounce on him for his past deeds, was not scared, but stepped forward fearlessly before the Khan, willing to sacrifice his own life for the King, ready to be executed in his place, and bending his knees said to him: "Oh, great Khan, I am the one who fought with Arghun-Agha." And the Khan asked: "Are you P'ap'a Sargis?" for the Tatars called him so. He answered: "I am the one." And the Khan asked: "Why did you disobey the King and quarrel with Arghun?" Sargis was not versed in the Tatar language, and Sadun was appointed as interpreter, an artful speaker in the presence of the Khan, whom Ulo liked and respected greatly, for he was reasonable and a kind-spoken man. Then Sargis answered: "Oh, Great Khan, there was no other reason than that he laid his hands on the Kingdom of David, he seized the towns and the villages and he destroyed the churches and the fortresses. Oh, the happiest of Khans, nobody has told you of such injustice, for he locked your doors with bribery. For this reason I brought the King here, and the happiest of Khans should know and judge the issue. And if you consider me worthy and ask me this question, then you must know, Oh Khan, that the Persians are our enemies since old times. That is why I made war and fought with Arghun, for we could not tolerate the injustice of Khoja-Aziz to the King. Oh, Khan, the King is innocent, I am the one who induced the King to turn from your court." And the words and arguments between them increased, but there is no time to talk or write about it now. The King, too, said many things. And Eruk Arkuan and the great Khan were sitting in the middle, and Sadun skillfully translated and adorned the King's words; for the King was somewhat uneasy with words, while Sadun of Mank'aberdi was exceptionally well spoken.

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And everyone expected that something bad would happen to the King and that execution was awaiting Sargis. Then the Lord granted mercy to those, who set their hopes upon Him, and protected them now as ever. And while the Khan and the King were exchanging words, a man appeared from Daruband, one of the traveling guards of the Khan who were called watchmen; the dispute was not finished, when this Khan's man entered the Horde and reported to the Khan: "There is no time for rhetoric, for the ulus of Bato, the greatest among the great Khans, and his son, the great Khan Berka, have set out with a great and numberless army, and are advancing by the road of Daruband."<sup>47</sup>

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Hearing this, the Khan called in haste his troops and they gathered promptly before him. They set off at once, and when the two armies approached each other, the King implored the Khan to assign him and his troops a place in the front lines, for it was in the custom for Georgians to fight in the first ranks. Ulo heeded his request, and appointed the King to the vanguard beside himself. And Sargis Jaq'eli he placed right before himself and he assigned people on his right and left. The commanders arranged the troops.

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But some other things also happened. A deer broke into the party, whom Sargis Jaq'eli, clad in armor, killed. They walked a little and the same Sargis hit a fox with an arrow. Then again he killed a rabbit in passing on their way. Khan Ulo was the witness to all three occurrences and he praised Sargis warmly and told him many good things.

5 Then the two armies approached each other and there appeared one distinguished person among them, who was sent by the great Khan Berka, for the Khan himself did not take part in the march. He approached King David, which caused anxiety among the King's soldiers, for the man was rather powerful and stately and an excellent marksman. But the King quickly picked out an arrow from his quiver and hit his horse in the chest, then thrusting his sword, he pierced the man's  
10 heart. Rejoicing and cheering, the Georgians rushed forward. A fierce and vigorous battle took place in the field of Sharabani. The King and his soldiers fought mightily, and Sargis performed such a glorious feat in the presence of Ulo that he managed to amaze the Khan. And the battle dragged on everywhere and people without number died on both sides. Then the army of Berka fled, and Ulo's people rushed in pursuit. But during this pursuit Ulo stood with about four of his men on a hill.  
15 When those pursued noticed him, seven of them, all chosen fighters, dashed for the Khan. Seeing this, Sargis who was passing by the place with three men, attacked these seven soldiers, and fought them (four against seven); and Sargis with his *aznauris* killed four of them straight away, and the remaining three took to flight. Ulo rejoiced, seeing with his own eyes how Sargis and his servants achieved this. And they continued to pursue Berka's people up to the gates of Daruband, then  
20 passed through Daruband and for three days continued to chase the enemy.

Victorious and glorious they returned to their camp in Bardav. The Khan paid homage to King David and his soldiers and presented them with many gifts, and granted to Sargis Jaq'eli a warrant for K'arnukalaki and the adjacent lands. That made some of his enemies jealous and they said to the King: "Now, you will have to give the kingdom to Sargis. Because the Khan has raised him, he  
25 will refuse to obey your highness." And the King believed them, for he was not firm in spirit, but credulous and easily trusted kind and evil words alike. And he went one night to *noin* Elga and told him: "If the Khan grants Sargis, K'arnukalaki, let him grant Sargis the whole kingdom as well." Wondering, *noin* Elga told him: "The Khan gave him that because of his loyalty to you, but if this displeases you he would not do it. Don't you, Georgians, reward those who fight fearlessly in battle?  
30 Don't you know that Sargis saved the Khan from the enemy, performing a brave and glorious feat?"

The *noin* went over to the Khan and told him everything, and Sargis was not given K'arnukalaki. Learning this, Sargis was upset and felt offended by his master. That winter the King remained in Bardav, while Sargis, departed for Samtskhe.

At that time Shanshe's son, *amirsp'asalar* Zachariah, a man endowed with all kinds of virtues  
35 broke with the Khan and fled to Kutaisi to Narin David, for he was accused of assisting Berka in his invasion. The King welcomed him kindly and spent some time with him. Then the Khan summoned him, taking an oath, though that did not sooth Ulo's heart, and he put to death *amirsp'asalar* Zachariah, an honest and eminent man. Learning this, his father – the great Shanshe – was seized by grief and passed away.

29. Queen Gvantsa, Avag's widow, during her sojourn with the Tatars was murdered by them. People say that she was killed due to the slander of her daughter Khuashak, who was the spouse of *sahib-divan* Khoja Shamsadin. Because the King was left without a wife he married Esukan, the daughter of the great *noin* Chormaghon. He departed for Tbilisi where he celebrated his wedding.

At that time the Ovses, who had fled from Khan Berka also returned; there was a wonderful woman by the name of Limachav among them, and she brought her little children with her; they were from the Akhasarpakiani family, the first-born Parejan and the younger son Baq'atar, and many chiefs with them. They passed the Daruband Gate and appeared before the King. He welcomed them affably as guests and sent them to Khan Ulo. Ulo rendered them homage, presented them with *kharaj*, accepted them in his army as allies, and sent them back to the King. The King settled them: some in the city, some in Dmanisi and the others – in Zhinovani.

When the harvesting time came, the Khan set out for the country of Shirvan, on the borders of Georgia, to the place which is called Chaghan-usun, or White river. They enclosed a place by the river bank with a stockade and called it "Siba," for Khan Ulo was afraid of the invasion of Khan Berka. And the Tatars and Georgians remained in Siba from the time of harvesting until spring. And in spring they departed for their summer location.

But then something happened: the children of the Khan – T'utar, Q'uli and Balagh – who were sent to Ulo, were seized and put to death by him. He seized their country and all their treasures. Learning of the murder of their master, the members of his family, who stayed in Greece, led by their chief – one by the name of Ala-Temur – took off at once and fled to Samtskhe with all his goods and his household.

Learning of the flight of Ala-Temur, the Tatars of Khan Ulo went in his pursuit and soon overtook him. But the fugitives turned around and fought the pursuers, slaying many of Khan Ulo's people. To keep a long story short, we will just say that before entering the K'ola mountains, the pursuers caught up with the fugitives twelve times, and twelve times Ala-Temur overpowered his pursuers and threw them off. They reached Lower Art'aani, and the village, which is called Glinavi. There they met Murvan Gurk'leli, son of Makhujag, who was hunting there; and they caught him and wanted to kill him. But he implored them not to do that, promising to take them over the Likhi (Likhtimeri) and to present them to Khan Berka. They believed him. He brought them to Samtskhe, led them into Gurk'lis Ch'ala conceiving to give them up. He sent a man to tell Sargis Tmogveli and Shalva, son of Botso and all the Meskhis and soldiers of Sargis Jaq'eli to gather together, catch Ala-Temur and deliver him up to Khan Ulo. They set out to realize this plan, but Ala-Temur found out about it, and departed with all his goods and household, and crossed the river Mt'k'vari towards Javakheti. He crossed Elasi, located close to Oshora and came to the place called Lerdzavi, where he ran up against Tmogveli, but he took a side route. Sargis and the son of Botso pursued him, closely followed by Murvan Gurk'leli. Gurk'leli with a small army caught the fugitives, but neither Botso with Sargis, nor Tmogveli with his people were close enough to help Gurk'leli. There was a fierce fight, and the Tatars overpowered Gurk'leli, slaying many courtly *aznauris*, and put him to flight.

The Tatars crossed Javakheti and Trialeti and crossed the river Mt'k'vari by Rustavi. Everywhere, the Tatars fought with the Somkhitians, but there is no time to give an account of this. Everywhere,

Ala-Temur remained victorious. They crossed K'ambechiani, K'akheti, Hereti, fighting battles everywhere, then took the Belakani road and crossed into Ghundzeti, where they were confronted by the King of Ghundz', but, again, the Tatars defeated him and returned victorious to Khan Berka. They performed such wonderful feats that the Tatars with them were named "*aghnars*", which means seniors or elders. Infuriated by what had happened, Berka began his preparations for an advance. And the Tatars (of Ulo), as I have already said, erected a wall by the river and spent the winter there.

And because the King was occupied with all these things and had no time for other matters, Basili of Chq'ondidi and Ujarma began to rule arbitrarily, taking no account of the King, and at the time of the King's stay in Imeria, inflicted a lot of harm on the King's estates because he considered them his property; and it was rumored that he was in close relations with Esurkan. Basili was slandered so much before the King, that the King commanded Basili to come before him and ordered to hung him on a tree. And they hung him on a tree in the middle of the city, for the King was credulous and simple-hearted.

When the time of the vintage came, the Khan departed again for Siba, and the King did the same. With the coming of spring, the Khan set out for Siaka, and his son Tankush went to Gelakun – for they used Gelakun as their summer station – and the Khan took the King with him and they stayed there. Then the King implored Tankush to intercede for him with his father, Khan Ulo, so that he would let him go to his kingdom. Tankush heeded his request and sent someone. But when they came to Siaka, Khan Ulo had already passed away. Then the *khatuns*, and *noins* ordered Tankush to let the King go to his kingdom. He released him, and the King came to Tbilisi, and to Kartli, and Somkhiti, and settled affairs there.

The *noins* enthroned Ulo's elder son, by the name of Abagha, a kind, generous and merciful man, and compassionate, obliging, humble, just, lawmaking, charitable to such extent, that even an inveterate villain would not reproach him. He used to say: "The Lord appointed me the sovereign of the whole world, and I will not take away from a man that which I did not give." Many times thieves robbed his treasury, and he did not put them to death, he just said: "Let me lose my treasures, let the wretched take them, they steal because they are needy." He had a mind, which lacked malice. Then Abagha appointed as commander a man remarkable in battle, by the name of Abata, and as a ruler of the Horde and his house he assigned the son of Chormaghon, called Sirmon, a victorious man and distinguished in battles. Because all those before him were bribe-takers, he chose one man, by the name of Aghubagha, a gracious law-maker, an obedient observer of fasts and a pilgrim, loving all those who placed their trust in the Christians, churches and the Lord. He appointed him the judge of the weak and poor. He changed the *noins* honored by Khan Ulo, though many of them had already passed away, like *noin* Elga and many others.

And King David went to this Abagha, and he respectfully welcomed him and rendered him homage. All the Tatars loyal to his father Ulo were obedient to Abagha.

At this time the great Khan Berka set out with his countless army upon the Daruband road to take vengeance for all the deeds of T'utar, Balagh and Q'uli. Learning of this, Khan Abagha called his troops together; King David set off to meet him.<sup>48</sup> Knowing the power and size of the Berka's army, Khan Abagha did not venture across the Mt'k'vari, but advanced along the banks and by back

roads. He occupied the high places and stationed his soldiers from the place where the Mt'k'vari and Rahts flow together, all the way up to Mtskheta.

Berka devastated the lands of Shirvan, Hereti, K'akheti and the banks of the Iori; his army reached Tbilisi and destroyed many Christian souls. Khan Berka stationed himself in the Gareji mountains. Then the Lord cast his merciful glance upon the country and Khan Abagha; Berka fell ill and died. When the soldiers learned of the death of their Khan, they took his body and returned home through the Gate of Daruband. And then the country calmed down.

But the fear of Berka's army continued to linger in the hearts of the Tatars and at the coming of harvest time, the King went to Siba as before. And when the time for leaving Siba came, the King called for his soldiers, and for Sargis Jaq'eli of Tsikhis-jvari. When Sargis appeared before King David in Tbilisi, the latter suspected him of plotting with the Khan and, yielding to the instigations of the evil minded, and forgetting of all his services, he invited him to his palace, seized him and locked him in the dungeon. Learning of this, the *aznauris* who accompanied him, fled to the Khan and told *noin* Abata of the capture of Sargis by the King and asked him to report it to Khan Abagha and set Sargis free. The Khan listened to the request of *noin* Abata and gave him an envoy; he came to Tbilisi, took Sargis and brought him to *noin* Abata. And from that time the Jaq'eli family remained subject to the Uloses up to the time of the splendid and most remarkable among kings – Giorgi.

This time the King did not depart for Siba, because his first-born son Giorgi, who was endowed with all kinds of virtues, had a stomach ache. The disease lasted so long that they began to think he was dying; for he lay silent, motionless, breathing hard, just keeping himself alive. Grief and a feeling of impotence seized the King and the whole of Georgia. Recalling Dmanisi Mother of God, the King went before Her. And on his way there he saw all kinds of barefoot people who followed him, and who, on meeting him cried out prayers. And the Holy Mother of God heeded their prayers and instantly after just one touch to Her and Her lips, opened Giorgi's eyes and he stood up as if he never had been ill. The King marveled at this and the whole population of Georgia was amazed by the Holy Mother of God, and everybody praised the Lord.

And again the King went to Siba, and during his stay there and towards the time of his return he fell ill with the similar stomach problem, and his healers could not cure him. He traveled in his coach, and was brought to a hermit; he approached the icon that was not human made, but appeared by itself on the canvas over the icon's riza. He ordered the icon to be brought close, and pressed his lips to it in tears and prayed, and it cured him like our Lord the Healer cured the one who lay on his deathbed. Now recovered, he went to his palace in Tbilisi and rested, and the *mtavaris* and *eristavis* tried to spare him from anxiety over the Khan. But they say, as was written of the wise Solomon too, that in his later years David behaved unjustly before the Lord, and spared from the raids of the Tatars, began ravaging the Episcopal Sees, dispensing with profitable villages, which were granted to him and to the monasteries by the blessed Kings. And as with Solomon, the enemy inspired other evil thoughts, which overcame him in his old age. That is why the Lord cherished not the image but the (spiritual) beauty, while bemoaning the death of his son; we, Adam's kin, dwell in madness, and the human heart bends assiduously towards evil; so it is written: "We desired not to listen to reason, but transgressing our lives, we gave ourselves to vanity," and as the wise Ecclesiastes says: "Vanity of

vanities, everything is vanity of vanities” and everything that we see under this sun is committed to vanity.

30. However, let's return to our story. As the time to leave for Siba came, the King, again, departed. And during his stay there his son Giorgi fell ill and passed away from internal bleeding, leaving unspeakable grief among the whole population of the kingdom, young and old alike. And the remains of the young Giorgi were put to rest in the church of Sioni, to wait for the King, for the time of his return had already come.

Some time passed and the King returned to Tbilisi. Because nobody came to meet him, with the exception of a few citizens, he rushed with uneasy foreboding to his palace, where the soldiers and viziers clad in mourning met him; and as they told him of the death of his son, Giorgi, he collapsed that same instant and passed out. They carried him in their hands to his chambers and with much difficulty brought him to his senses, for if a soul is extinguished, consciousness disappears at the same time, but if consciousness disappears the soul is not extinguished, so says the creator of words. The pain that seized him after losing his beloved son was only augmented when he thought of the exalted, well-looking youth of eighteen, brave and skilled in military rules. In the profundity of his grief, and moaning, he desired death for himself. He looked at his son, Giorgi, dead in the prime of life, who lay deathly pale before him, mourned by the people. Wailing they took Giorgi to Mtskheta, buried him there and returned overwhelmed with grief. His love for his son increased his pain and from that day on, joy disappeared from his life, he caught many diseases, and most of the time he was sick in his body and could not serve Khan Abagha.

Then began to rise Sadun of Mank'aberdi, who was first pardoned by Ulo because of his power as a wrestler, who was respected by Khan Abagha and to whom the great Sahib-Divan showed goodwill by appointing him to the position of *ejib* of his wife Khuashak, daughter of Avag, and King David granted him many lands.

A faction started among the Tatars; Khan Abagha broke with Tegutar, the younger brother of Khan Barakha, who was a descendant of Khan Chaghat'a, son of Genghis-Khan, and who held the country of Turan and great Turkey. Khan Barakha dwelt in Turan, and he sent his brother Tegutar there in order that the *kharaj*, which according to the (existing) law had been levied from the country, as it was noted above, went to Tegutar. Tegutar brought twenty thousand soldiers with him. Abagha allotted him a summer station in the Art'ana Mountains, and a winter station on the bank of the Rakhsi River in Nakhchevan. Tegutar became jealous of Abagha's Kingdom and asked his brother, Khan Barakha, who was on the other side of Jeon: "Why do we give the kingdom and the great country to Abagha? Now, you advance from there and I from here, and together we will overpower him and seize his country." He resorted to the following ruse: taking three wooden arrows he cut off their heads, then put the secret notes to his brother in them and fastened them with ivory, for the Tatars had guards everywhere and travelers and messengers could read them.

And when Tegutar's messenger appeared before his brother Khan Barakha, he took kindly to his words and plan, and agreed upon their meeting, and to the overthrow of Khan Abagha and the seizure of his country. And he set the time –Tegutar's departure and Barakha's crossing of the Jeon with his army. But Providence dispelled their plans and protected Abagha, because of his purity,

righteousness and truthfulness. The writer made a mistake, writing that the departure of Tegutar had to take place two Moons earlier, for they calculate their months by the Moon. And he also put this message in the head of an arrow. The messenger set out and arrived at Nigalisveli and gave Tegutar the arrows, and Tegutar opened the arrow's head and took his brother Barakha's letter. And he learned from the message of the closeness of their meeting, and he gathered in haste his goods and household, and soldiers, about ten thousand five hundred, for he could not gather more because of his haste and the fear of disclosure of his evil designs. He departed toward the Ghado Mountains in K'archkhali and K'ari, which are situated between Shavsheti and Ach'ara, and set up a camp at Pich'uta in Shavsheti. He addressed Sargis Jaq'eli with a request to give him passage, because he was going to appear before David, the King of Abkhazia, to be a mediator, promising that if he gained a victory he would promote him greatly. While they talked, Sargis listened favorably to Tegutar. 5 10

Abagha called his troops together and the *mandat'urtukhutsesi* Ivane, the son of the great Shanshe, and ordered them to pursue Tegutar. He appointed as their commander the son of *noin* Chormaghon, Sirmon, a man fearless and glorious in battles, and recruited many other *noins*. They came to the Art'ana Mountains and set up camp there. 15

Then a miracle happened, one that exceeds all that was born of a mother, which is the word of God, our Lord Christ, born of a Virgin, and the one who baptized with his own hands and heard the heavenly voice of the Father, and saw the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove, and taught St. John the Baptist. This desert is not unknown in the Ghado Mountains: Op'iza is the first among the twelve deserts. Here is the larynx of one who exceeded all the prophets and disciples, the larynx of the great John the Baptist, which did not lapse into silence in its glorification of the revealed God, and which condemned the iniquities of Herod. And so, adorned by precious treasure and full of Chosen Divinity, this is the dwelling of the Baptist and the true dwelling of the Prince himself, as will be shown later. 20 25

Having heard of the greatness of the Op'iza desert, of the splendor of its honored icons and icon lamps, Tegutar wished to seize it; he sent there about a thousand of his horsemen with the purpose of ravaging it. They advanced by the mountain path to K'archkhali. But the Heavenly Judge disposed otherwise; the Lord would not bring dishonor on so many holy fathers – whose work in Op'iza shone, who had illuminated it by miraculous signs, and entrusted themselves to John the Baptist. He would not permit a massacre by pagans, nor did He wish to dishonor that voice, the unsilenced herald of the Lord. And so He defended his dwelling and sent mist and darkness upon the invaders; and they were unable to move their foul feet, for they approached the desert and stood at the foot of the mountain named Dzegli, on which is the church of St. George between Op'iza and Midznadzor. Then John the Illuminator looked mercifully at his abode and, like Immaculate Blachernae Mother of God, sent a fierce wind to the Ghado Mountain, and heat, and hail, and a terrible rain, and the earth began to move as in a high sea, and the waters rushed down, and the small river that flows into the river of Shavshuri, overflowed, reaching the top of Dzegli, so that even now man can see the traces of that great flood. The waters raged and swept the Tatars completely away, men and horses, leaving only one man alive. He returned to Tegutar to inform him of what had happened, like 30 35 40

the herald to Job: "The place is the House of the Lord, the dwelling of the Lord's servants, beware of going there." Tegutar stood on the high top of the Arsiani Mountain and they came and told him: "The great army of Abagha has arrived and is camped at the mountain of Art'aani, tomorrow they will be here." Hearing this, at dawn, Tegutar took his goods and household and hid them behind the strong mountain of K'ari, to which only one road goes, and he himself advanced with his troops to Arsiani. Sirmon, too, came over the mountain of Q'ueli. And both came to the approaches of Q'ueli. Sirmon, who was glorious in battles walked at the head of his troops; so did the people of Tegutar: Segzi, Jolak, Abishkha, Tolak-Demur. They engaged in a great battle, in which countless people fell on both sides. The battle continued and Tegutar was overcome, and he fled to his household in the direction of the Ghado Mountains of Jnalistavi, and Sirmon followed him, but Tegutar confronted him, pinning his hopes on the strength of the mountains.

A powerful battle took place, which continued for two days. Falling into distress, Tegutar fell back, but in a very strange manner. Some of his men retreated through Ach'ara, some – through Nigaliskhevi, which was thoroughly impassable. And not one man that had seen those mountains could understand, how they managed to pass over them, for it is quite impossible for a man to cross them, to say nothing of horses, because of the steepness of the mountains and the thickness of the forest, thistle and thornbush, that is called *burts'umel*, which grows over them. The places covered by ivy, which the Tatars entered were impenetrable even by beasts. But one more thing: they passed over one mountain, rocky at its foot and with some soil on top, on which a forest was growing. But while they were crossing, an avalanche happened, which buried the horses and horsemen alike; they disappeared, and so the wretched perished. And even now the inhabitants of Mach'ara digging there find women's golden and silver adornments.

Others passed Ach'ara and Nigaliskhevi, and then crossed Guria and appeared in Kutaisi before King David. He met them with joy and gave them a lavish feast, including five hundred roasted cows, not counting pigs and sheep. And on the same day he gave their army six hundred horses, – one thousand five hundred head of cattle, two thousand sheep, and pigs. All that he presented to Tegutar that day, the latter divided it among his soldiers. The King's action left both Tegutar and his soldiers amazed; and there was no end of wines, they brought them on carts in vessels.

31. King David, being generous and humble, welcomed his guests. He was wise in all his deeds, and champion of a good name. And so like a servant he attended upon Tegutar. The Queen, the daughter of the King of Constantinople, Palaeologus, also tried to please Tegutar's wife, and they became close with each other and enjoyed each other's confidence. King David constantly presented himself before Tegutar, observing all the necessary rites and orders, and such was his relationship with him.

Sirmon returned victorious to Khan Abagha, but then a man from Khorasan came, one of guards on the road, and informed them that "the *ulus* of the great Turan and the Great Khan Barakha had crossed Jeon with a countless army," for Barakha set out at the time agreed, and he was told of Tegutar's retreat. Abagha was amazed and summoned his subjects and all the Georgians. And although King David was quite drained of strength due to the death of his son, he, too, departed for Khorasan with all his army and came to Eri, and from there to the field of Amosi. They approached

each other. They placed the King and his troops in the front, in order to protect their army from the assault of Barakha, meanwhile looking for information about the *ulus* and Barakha's army. Abagha sent forward other *noins* four or five miles ahead. He charged them with obtaining information related to Barakha's army, and to retreat in the case of assault; they began to circle the enemy's army. These detachments which go far ahead of the main body of troops are called in their language *q'arauls*. 5

And so the King and the Tatar *q'arauls* set out, and after walking for two days at dusk they camped; at sunrise they saw dust, which rose like a cloud over the Amosi field. They guessed that it was Barakha with his army. The King and Sikdur saddled their horses but, in compliance with the order of Abagha, the latter wanted to retreat, and he said to the King: "We are *q'arauls* and have just a few people with us; we have found their army and let us go to the Khan and inform him of their coming. But the King said: "We Georgians are not used to turning our backs to the enemy, without giving him battle, even if death awaits us." Hearing this, the Tatars were amazed, and filled with indignation. They said: "You do not know what you say! You have no orders from Abagha to engage the great Khan without him. You Georgians are reckless and do not know anything," and they implored the King and his people and threatened them with the Abagha's wrath, but could not persuade them to give in. Then they hastily sent a man to the Khan and informed him: "Barakha comes with a great army, we see a cloud of dust and the Amosi field darkened completely by the dust; and in accordance with your instruction we want to retreat and appear before you, but the Georgians are unreasonable creatures, and will not go with us. They say: "We are not accustomed to retreating from the enemy." If you, our Khan, do not come and give your orders, we will be doomed to lay down our lives; so hurry with your help." 10 15 20

When the envoy came, Abagha, learning of the arrival of Barakha and amazed at the persistence of the *q'arauls*, quickly saddled his horse and setting out with his army came in time with his troops ready to fight; and he called the King and said to him: "I know of your soldierly valor. You Georgians are disobedient and mad. If one of my *noins* had done what you did, I would have put him to death. But I do not blame you; you are ignorant of our rules. Now stand in the first line with your troops." The King dismounted his horse, bowed before him and said: "Oh, great Khan, it is not among the habits of a Georgian to turn his back after seeing his enemy. Now let the happy eyes of the Khan see how we give our lives." 25

The King placed himself in the front line. And the great and fearless *noin* Abata, who was the commander, or *amirsp'asalar*, stood on the left side; on his left side also were Sirmon and the great Bugha; and Sikdur, T'oghan-Bugha, Jinilis, Arghun-Agha and Ias-Bugha stood on the right, and the other *noins* were placed on both sides. And Barakha arranged his troops in a similar orderly manner. 30

32. Then a man came by the name of Alinaq', leader of a hundred, not a descendant of any noble family, but with a stately body, strong and fearless, charming, slim and good-looking. He asked the *noin* Abata to allow him, when he thought it appropriate, to fight with his men as an advanced detachment. And the *noin* Abata agreed to this wish. Then both armies approached each other and the battle took place, great and dreadful. Alinaq' cut into the enemy's ranks, cleaved them and together with his people passed through them; then he called them together, turned round and crying "Alla, Alla" cut again through the enemy's ranks. Then again he turned back and smashed the 35 40

enemy lines, again with his “Alla, Alla.” And the Georgians gave a furious battle, for the Khan saw with his own eyes how the King and his people in the front ranks crowded the enemy and forced them to flee. *Noin* Abata labored so forcefully that overthrowing a well armed horseman in the fight, hoisted him into his saddle and kept him like an eagle would a hazel hen during the whole battle.

5 Sirmon, too, acted bravely and put to flight all his adversaries. Khan Barakha happened to be to the right of the Abagha’s *noins* – Sikdur, T’oghan-Bugha, Jinili and Arghun-Agha. Barakha put them to flight at once and pursued them until the following day, while Abagha followed them for two days, not knowing what had happened, because of the extended location of the troops. When Barakha learned of the flight and defeat of his army, he turned back, and, again, they approached each other and got  
10 ready for battle. As soon as the *noin* Abata saw Barakha, he raised his spear and went towards his detachment, for this *noin* was fine and stately, with broad shoulders and chest like a lion’s, fearless and strong, vigorous and slim, and quite outstanding. And his troops followed him, and pursued the enemy and slew and captured countless numbers of men. Victorious they returned to their Horde.

At the time when Khan Abagha was in Khorasan at war with Khan Barakha, Tegutar sent over  
15 three commanders with their households and goods – Segzi-Badur, Abishkha and Tolak-Demur by name, and a fourth – Jolak. They stationed themselves in the mountains that branch from the Caucasus and which are called Likhi. And so they went west into the mountains that are called Ghado, and at their crossing – Demoti – the Tatars camped in the place called Lomistavi. From there they ravaged Javakheti up to Faravan. Then the Tatars that stationed there passed Ek’eriskhevi  
20 and, fording across the Mt’k’vari above Ats’q’uri entered Javakheti. They met on their way the herd (of cows) of K’akha of Tori, who was honored by the rank of *mech’urch’letukhutsesi*, and the herd of Q’urumchi, head of a thousand horsemen; not Q’urumchi, the son of Alinaq’, but someone else’s son. They took the herds with them and went to Lomistavi. Learning of this, Q’urumchi-Badur called K’akhi of Tori, and set out in pursuit of the Tatars. But Tegutar’s people had crossed the Mt’k’vari  
25 already at the place where the Gurk’li River flows into it. And the pursuers came to the bank of the Mt’k’vari. Since there were too many of the Tatars and the Georgians, and too few of the other party, the latter resorted to a ruse. Tolak-Demur crossed the Mt’k’vari with thirty men unobserved, while the others remained on the opposite bank. Then Tolak-Demur left the gorge, ascended the ridge, raised the flag like a banner and rushed down with loud cries. As Q’urumchi-Badur saw troops in front and  
30 behind him, he thought that there were a great number of them; he was scared and took flight, and many fine men were killed. Both of the Kokht’ians found their end there. Samdzivari, whose horse was killed under him, swam across the river to Ats’q’uri. The leader of the Tatars, Q’urumchi-Badur, was killed and his people were dispersed; unable to escape they went over the Rugeti Mountain up the steep slope which is called K’virik’ets’minda. And they (the winners) returned victorious to the  
35 Khan’s brother Tegutar. And Tegutar, impassioned, invaded Kartli and began to ravage it.

Khan Abagha implored King David, Rusudan’s son, not to support Tegutar or admit him to his country, promising many gifts in return. Suspecting Tegutar of treachery against Abagha, and hearing it directly from Tegutar’s subjects, King David preferred to obey Abagha rather than Tegutar. He closed his roads to horsemen. Tegutar knew nothing of it. Abagha realized that King David was not  
40 helping Tegutar. He sent his commander, Sirmon-Badur, and other chief *noins* and a lot of troops.

They came to Trialeti and summoned King David and his army. But because the King was ill at the time, he sent all his *mtavaris* to Sirmon instead. Sirmon entered Kartli.

Learning of Sirmon's arrival, Tegutar drew up his troops and a battle took place and many were slain on both sides, but the night fell and they broke apart. At daybreak they again prepared for battle, lining up face to face. A fierce battle took place and the King's troops fought in the front lines. And they clashed with each other, and Tegutar's people took to flight, and they were dispersed, killed and driven away. Tegutar and his son, a helpless little child, escaped. They came to Sirmon, and Tegutar implored him to arrange a meeting for him and his son with Khan Abagha. Sirmon listened to him but took his household captive and seized all his possessions: his goods, property and herds. He brought Tegutar and his son before Abagha. But Abagha did no harm to them, for he was a merciful and indulgent man, as we have said above, but sent him to the Iraqi lands, and gave him and his son twelve men, a lavish subsistence and garments, falcons, hawks and leopards; and assigned him maintenance so that he experienced no deficiency in anything, and appointed guards to prevent him returning to his lands. And Tegutar lived in a restful state, and so passed away.

Khan Abagha sent many presents and gifts to the King and (granted him) many villages in Kartli and At'eni.

33. The Khan departed for Siba and took King David with him. There he spent the winter season and with the coming of summer returned. On their way back the King fell ill with his stomach ailment and seeing that the physicians were unable to cure him, he prayed to the icon of Mart'q'opi and came before it, as he was used to doing, for earlier, plagued by a stomach disease and lying speechless like a dead man, he was raised up by the image of the incarnated God. But this time he found no relief, because weakened in his devotion, he had begun to ravage and destroy Sees. And the Lord removed his merciful arm; and while the previous year his first-born son, Giorgi, a most honorable young man, died, now David passed away, grieving for his son. But he had also another son, well remembered, fearless and valiant, Dimit'ri by name, who later became King. When David ended his life, he was buried in the royal burial place in Mtskheta. But they say that he may have been poisoned by his wife Ersukan; and, as it is said of the Macedonian, who, having a headache, was given a doubtful medicine by Midos and Ant'ip'at'ros, they say that Esukan took vengeance on him for putting to death Basil of Ujarma for his dishonorable behavior: Basil committed adultery with Esukan and dishonored the King's bed, and threw off his cassock, and stole the power. And for this dishonor, Basil was put to death.

So King David passed away and inconsolable grief seized the whole Georgian people. He was mourned according to his rank, and many gifts were given to churches and temples, and to the wretched for remembering him in their prayers. The *mtavaris* grieved, for King Dimit'ri was a little boy and unable to reign. And for that reason most of them served the Khan, for King David could not bring the *eristavis* to reason, because of his fear of the Khan.

Ghalghur and the *eristavi* of Rach'a, K'akhaber, arranged between them to break with King David, Rusudan's son, and left for the camp of Khan Abagha. They let Alinaq' Badur know of their intention, who was in the mountains of Javakheti, and the latter informed the Khan. The Khan gave Alinaq' Badur great presents. Ghalghur and K'akhaber's son K'akhaber, who was evil in his seed,

as says the Book of the Kings about Baghushi and his relatives, set out. When they arrived at the Khan's, he welcomed them, called *noin* Sirmon and said: "King David is a rebel, but that is not enough; he is helping all our rebels; for instance, he assisted Tegutar, and now Ghalghur. I gave him a lot of gifts and rendered him homage, because of Tegutar, but then he sheltered Ghalghur. Now  
5 I am willing to avenge him." And hearing these words K'akhaber stepped forward and said: "If the Khan wants to have revenge on King David, then I came here precisely for that. I know how to carry out the invasion and will let loose my troops upon him. I will have the upper hand over the King. Ghalghur knows the roads and the forces of their country."

Khan Abagha ordered the *noin* Sirmon and Alinaq', Taicho and Abchi to march against King  
10 David. They gathered an army of three *bevrís* in number and crossed Trialeti and then the Likhi Mountains, and stormed into Kutaisi, while the King was taking his bath. He had hardly the time to mount his horse and flee, having only his shirt on him. And the Tatars ravaged the churches and many Christians were slain and taken captive. They appeared unharmed before the Khan. But the King, protected wonderfully by the Lord, had escaped. He had no time to give battle to them,  
15 because they retreated in haste.

In the third year, Sirmon and Alinaq', again obeying the Abagha's order, set out to catch the King, who, being visited by K'akhaber, was not thinking of the Tatars at all. Again, they invaded, though the King evaded them, and they devastated his lands. But as soon as the Tatars learned of the preparations of the King, they fled in haste, taking the spoil and captives with them.

20 At this time Sadun of Mank'aberdi had risen above all the other *mtavarís* of his time, because Khan Abagha was fond of him. He began to be concerned with Georgian affairs, for the daughter of his master, *Atabag* Avag, asked Sadun about it, while Khuashak even gave him the rank of *ejib*.

The Georgian princes and nobles gathered and took the son of the King – Dimit'ri – to the Horde. And they came to the *mandat'urtukhutsesi* Ivane, the son of Shanshe. He went with them  
25 to the Horde. They presented him before the Khan at the Horde so that he could deliver Dimit'ri his kingdom. And when the Khan saw Dimit'ri,<sup>49</sup> he had mercy on him, for he was well-built and handsome, and he granted him the kingdom, with the exception of the estates of Sargis Jaq'eli, and assigned Sadun to accompany him, to whom King Dimit'ri granted the rank of *atabag*. Dimit'ri came to Tbilisi and ascended the throne of his fathers, and the rite of blessing was performed by  
30 the Katholikos and the bishops and by all the *mtavarís* of Georgia, from Hereti, K'akheti, Javakheti and T'ao. All gathered for the event. And they gave thanks to God and rejoiced greatly and granted presents to the wretched and to orphans, so that the reign of Dimit'ri and his rule of Georgia could be successful.

34. Then Khan Abagha started a war with the ruler of the Egyptians, Sultan Punduk'adar of Misr and sent a powerful army against him, including Georgian troops; he appointed Badur Todan, from the Saldus family and chief of the Garets, the commander, and sent him along the road that goes from Greece to Sham. He informed the Sultan of Greece, Parvan, for the great Sultan Seljukid Q'iasdin had passed away. His right hand man (Parvan) had seized the Sultanate and married his wife, Rusudan's daughter, Gurji-Khatun; so Parvan possessed the whole Pont, Asia and Cappadocia. The Khan asked him for military assistance.

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The troops of Abagha set out, appeared before Parvan and camped in Evkhait', which is Asurast'an. As soon as Sultan Punduk'adar learned of the approach of the Tatars, he confronted them with his Egyptian army and fell upon them at daybreak; and a great battle took place, in which the Georgians displayed the fearlessness that amazed the Tatars. Then one Tatar, Morghul by name, rushed alone at the Arabs, and breached their ranks; and one unmounted soldier cut the right hind leg of his horse close to its hoof. And then a wonderful thing happened: Abagha's army took flight and Todan was killed. Then Morghul continued to ride on the legless horse and rode for three days and nights. Then the horse died.

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The destruction of his army and of the Georgians grieved Abagha immensely. Slandorous things were said of the Sultan of Greece, Parvan, that Punduk'adar attacked on his advice. They seized Parvan, and though Abagha did not want his death, the *noins* killed him and appropriated all his property. They sent to Greece a descendant of the first Khans, the great and kind *noin* from the On-Khan family, by name of Erinji. And he was given the government of Greece. He removed Ats'q'uri from the Samtskhe region, which belonged to Parvan from his wife's line, and granted it to Sargis Jaq'eli and his son, Beka.

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Meanwhile King Dimit'ri had grown up and had begun to think of good deeds, for this Dimit'ri was stately, of fair complexion, handsome, with beautiful hair and beard, brown-eyed and slender, learned in military operations, a perfect rider and archer, generous, gracious to the wretched and humble; there was no one like him not only in the King's family, but among other people as well. He made it a rule for himself, wealthy as he was, to get up in the night and go into the city to find beggars, the wretched and orphans, and then with his own hands to distribute gifts among them. And everybody knew of the King's generosity; beggars wandered at night in the streets, hoping to meet the King. Besides, he fasted, kept night vigils and went down on his knees many times, performing one thousand and five hundred deep kneeling at a time. He was gifted in every way, but he remained in the hands of Sadun, for the Khan had raised him (Sadun) very high in status. Sadun took care of Telavi and Belakani and many other lands for King Dimit'ri. And he excellently managed Georgian affairs, for there was no violence or lawlessness on the part of the Tatars, nor the great *noins*, nor their ministers. And Georgia revived.

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The King began to visit Siba and restored the ravaged lands there. He also built a monastery in the Isani Palace in order to keep the Met'ekhi Mother of God there; and he adorned it properly and donated villages and vineyards to it, and maintained clothes for the monks and introduced sensible

rules. He departed for the Horde, and during his stay there he asked about the many things initiated by Sadun. And Sadun told him: "If you give me Dmanisi, I will pay the Khan for it." The King listened to him and gave him Dmanisi and its vicinities contrary to his own will, and raised Sadun still more. But Sadun did good things for the monasteries and the poor; in his lifetime he granted Q'alani and Mali to the Twelve Deserts of Gareji, and freed the lands of Gareji, and served King Dimit'ri. He provided himself with an army and a treasury – gold and silver – and possessed incalculable herds and immeasurable wealth, for he was easy to deal with, considerate and wise, and Khan Abagha and the great Sahib-Divan valued his advice; the estates of *atabag* Avag belonged to him and his daughter, Khuashak, was married to Sahib-Divan. This Sahib-Divan was favored by Khan Ulo; Sadun, too, had been favored by him. The whole country of the Khan was under his control and everybody obeyed his orders. Sadun bought many lands and the Kings granted him K'ari, and he settled in K'ari, and, through clever guile, acquired the adjoining lands from the Akhaltsikhians, and took as wife the daughter of the governor of Akhaltsikhe. The Khan charged him with the management of the Georgian army, and the Georgian, Armenian and Er-K'akh courtiers dwelt with the King.

35. At this time raised the *sp'asalar* of Samtskhe and *mech'urch'letukhutsesi* Sargis Jaq'eli and his son Beka, who governed in Samtskhe. Of Sargis's deeds we wrote above, now we will tell of his son Beka. Beka was stately, of fair complexion, brown-eyed and dark-haired, broad-shouldered and high-chested, a strong and brave fighter, an artful rider, a good archer at the hunt, careful in reasoning, an organizer and builder of churches and monasteries, and respectful to God-loving people. He was a devoted worshiper who missed no daybreak service, or liturgy, or vespers, observing the rules that are put down by the Typicon. And the Lord, too, favored him with a worthy spouse, who devoted herself to praying and fasting, was merciful to the poor, respectful to monasteries and icons, and provided orphans and the wretched with sustenance.

Then Beka took possession of the country from T'asisk'ari to K'arnukalaki: Samtskhe, Ach'ara, Shavsheti, K'larjeti and most of T'ao, Vashlovani, Nigaliskhevi, Art'anuji, Twelve Deserts, K'ola, K'arnipora, both Art'anis and many villages in Javakheti. And so he was rising day by day, serving Khan Abagha and obeying King Dimit'ri. King Dimit'ri succeeded with his love of God and man, and continued to rise in the Khan's esteem. When he was still a boy, they decided to send a man to the Pont to the King of Greece, Comnenus, who was of the Great Constantine's seed, and he (the man) brought the daughter of King Comnenus of Trabzon in glory and with great treasures; they celebrated the wedding as is appropriate for a King. And a little later the Queen conceived and gave birth to a son, who was given the name David and who became later the last King of Kartli.

At that time, Arghun who had worked out the complete census of the domains subject to the Khans, appeared again; his task was to make an inventory of the lands and find out to what extent they were ravaged or rehabilitated. He concluded that most of them were devastated, and most of all in Hereti and K'akheti; for the valleys of K'ambechiani were plundered during the first arrival of the Tatars, when the great Khan Berka came. Then at the time of Arghun Oirad's stay in Tbilisi, he asked the King for Tamar, the King's only sister, saying: "Your well-remembered father promised me his daughter, your sister, as a daughter-in-law to marry my son, but he did not live long enough. Now

I am asking you not to reject my request as unworthy, and give me your sister for my son.” Hearing this, the King felt quite upset and grieved greatly; he tried to overcome his pining spirit looking for inner strength, for he hated the marriage of his Christ worshipping sister with a heathen; however he was powerless to change anything, for his own father did promise her. He married her to Arghun’s son and they celebrated their wedding as was due. And Arghun returned to the Horde leaving his son by the King.

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The Queen conceived again and gave birth to a son, and they gave him the name of Vakht’ang.

And again peace came to the lands beyond Likhi. And King David settled down; he was first of all a kind and reasonable man, generous, humble and hospitable, more than any king before him, and he lived in so much peace.

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The *eristavi* of Rach’a, K’akhaber, lived in Kartli, owning the outskirts of At’eni; he was held in disfavor by the Khan as well as by King Dimit’ri, because of his duplicity in relations with the Kings. Straitened in his affairs, he implored the King to have mercy on him and grant him his own estate. And the kind and merciful King showing pity, pardoned him, and, swearing firmly that he would not accuse him of past wrongs, asked him to come in peace with him, and granted him all his estates. And so K’akhaber regained his estates in Rach’a, but as the time passed, he began again to walk along the path of his fathers and forefathers, like a pig looking for mud, and spouting venom like a viper. He inherited this double-dealing from his kin. And forgetful of all his promises he resorted again to treachery and sent an envoy with a letter to the chief of a thousand, Alinaq’, who stayed in the mountains of Javakheti and K’oli, proposing an assault on the King as in former times so as to lay his hands upon him. But the Lord made his design futile, like the design of Ahitophel against David, and the message was revealed. So he incurred a well-deserved retribution on himself, and his lie boomeranged on him. The King caught him and gouged his eyes at first, then he cut off one hand and one leg, and subjected his sons to exile, sending them to Constantinople, because the Queen, his spouse was the daughter of the great Emperor Palaiologos. K’akhaber, alive for a short time, passed away. And so K’akhaber Baghvash’s kin disappeared, and no descendant of his remained, as well as any memory.

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At this time, the Khan decided to make war to the country of Gilani, because it had got out of control, refusing to pay tribute. He sent the Tatar and Georgian troops, but did not send the King along with them. He assigned Sirmon-Badur as commander of the army, and they set out and invaded Gilani. The Gilanians gathered and manned their fortresses. The country was protected by rocky mountains and forests with narrow paths on one side, and by the sea from the other. So fortified, they lined up and gave fierce battle. The Gilanians brought down showers of arrows on their enemy’s heads. Sirmon dismounted and squatted, turning back to his soldiers, and all his men also dismounted. And as the arrows diminished, Sirmon got up and rushed forward like a leopard, and the Georgians rushed bravely with him, putting the Gilanians to flight; and they cut two of Sirmon’s fingers, but there were no losses among the Tatar and Georgian troops. Though, having seen that the strongholds of this country were impregnable and it was impossible to seize them, they returned to Khan Abagha.

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And the country came to peace, and tranquility reigned everywhere. The Lord looked mercifully on those who set their hopes upon Him and there was an abundance of bread and wine. King Dimit'ri settled the affairs of the Kingdom.

When the troubles receded a little, people began to go back to their pleasures, and turned away from the path of the Lord, for the King took three wives, and Sadun had three wives as well. And the nobles began to lay their hands on the churches and monasteries, to ravage the villages and estates, and particularly the Meskhi Church – the magnificent Ats'q'uri. And though this outrage was severely censured by Katholikos Nik'oloz and Nik'oloz of Mats'q'uri, the son of Juansher, nobody took heed of them.

Then evil appeared once more; people turned to lawlessness and theft, and no law-giver was to be found anywhere, and the pastors and priests were willful, arrogant, mercenary, malicious and dishonorable. Though why continue with these words; evil was everywhere.

36. Then came the day of trial for our sins, for Arghun came to Samtkhe to call on Sargis Jaq'eli, because he had grown decrepit with the diseases of old age and was weakened in all his members. Arghun made a tour of Somkhiti, Tbilisi and Kartli with his troops which numbered twelve thousand, causing great distress to the country, not because of any malicious intent, but due to forcible extortion. He came to Samtskhe quietly and stationed his troops in Ats'q'uri. Sargis learned of his arrival, and came to him with his son Beka. Arghun was surprised at seeing both together, and took Sargis with him to the Horde; he left Beka at Samtskhe, for it was the fifth week of the Holy Fast. Leaving Samtskhe they came to Somkhiti.

Holy Week came, and on Great Wednesday the earth shook severely because of our disbelieving souls. On Thursday the ground shook again, though less strongly, but nobody understood why God the merciful got angry. Saturday came and at three o'clock in the afternoon – the next day being assigned for celebrations on the occasion of God's Resurrection of which everybody lived in joyful expectation – God looked on the earth with anger because of our iniquities, and the earth shuddered right down to its foundations. It shook so that chapels crashed down and monasteries, churches, fortresses and houses, and buildings, all collapsed; mountains and hills crumbled, and rocks turned into dust. The ground opened wide and black streams of fluid resembling tar gushed out; high trees tumbled down and swayed with the shaking of the world; and down came the church of Ats'q'uri, and because Ats'q'uri Holy Mother of God stood in the middle of the church, its dome just covered Her like a cap, leaving Her intact due to the powers she possessed. The church of Mtskheta also collapsed, and people without number perished in Samtskhe; and there were no more churches, chapels or fortresses anywhere, and everywhere groaning was heard and there was immeasurable sorrow.

Arghun-Agha lived with the Khan, but he had some illness of which he died. Learning of this, his son came to the Royal Court, leaving his spouse in Tbilisi. The King's sister, Tamar, ran away into the mountains, for she hated her husband as he was faithless and a heathen. Then Sadun, learning that the King's sister did not want Arghun's son as her husband, bargained for her with Khan Abagha. The latter, yielding, sold her. The King gave his sister to Sadun. Sadun behaved

improperly, for she was his third wife. This angered Katholicos Nik'oloz, a just elder. But he could do nothing against Sadun's power, though he censured him strongly.

At this time, for some reason, Sargis and his son, Beka, drifted away from the Tatars. Sargis was aging, weak because of a sickness affecting his legs. Arukha's brother, Tual, was sent to Samtskhe by *noin* Bugha, with the object of ravaging the region. Arukha himself came with an army of twenty thousand men. But Beka evaded him, retreating into the mountains, located between Guria and Ach'ara. The Meskhis hid themselves in the caves and forests. The troops crossed Samtskhe, inflicting no damage on it. After twenty days there, they departed, leaving the country in peace.

As the year passed, Abagha decided to invade Egypt and impose a tribute on it. He called all his people and King Dimit'ri with his troops, to wage war against Nasir Melik, the new Sultan of Egypt, who had replaced the late Punduk'adar. Abagha summoned his younger brother and assigned him as commander, and gave him his whole army. He ordered him to go and wage war on the Sultan. Mangu-Demur summoned the *mtavari* of Samtskhe, Beka, demanding he go with him, but Beka answered: "Because of the slanders of my enemies, your brother Abagha is angry with me and sent Arukha against me and ravaged my country. Though I have escaped the troubles because of my innocence, I still fear the Khan; so you must convince me by taking an oath, that the Khan will peacefully protect my country and my estates. Then I will appear before you with my army."

Hearing this, Mangu-Demur rejoiced and took the oath, drinking the golden water, proving his firmness, and presented Beka with the seal ring from his finger, because that was considered a sign of a firm oath. The envoy informed Beka of all this, and Beka quickly called all the Meskhis and appeared before Mangu-Demur. Mangu-Demur was very glad and rendered him homage, and presented him to Abagha, who also showed him much honor and love, for his kindness.

They set out for Misr. They travelled many days and reached a town, which was called Darbuzak'. Its citizens came out, and a battle took place, in which Beka and the Meskhis, who were at his side, toiled harder than any other group. The Tatars and Georgians stormed into the town, and the Meskhis pressed forward most of all. And after the heat of battle had subsided, Mangu-Demur honored Beka with robes and wonderful horses, not forgetting Beka's nobles and *aznauris*.

They set out for Egypt and approached the towns of Amasi and Amo, and set up a camp by them. Sultan Nasir Melik learned of the appearance of the Tatars and came at once with all his forces. As soon as Mangu-Demur saw the Sultan and his army, he made preparations for a fight and moved forward. King Dimit'ri, though not quite prepared due to his youth to do battle, implored Mangu-Demur to assign him and his troops the front lines. The request was satisfied. The battle commenced, fierce and forceful, the greatest that had ever happened. And knowing of the courage and invincibility of the King and his army, the Sultan himself took command of twelve thousand choice horsemen and assigned them two brave commanders, in order that if the battle increased in strength, he would overcome the enemy and force the Georgians to retreat. The battle started and many people fell on both sides. Then Q'ara-Sunghur and Iaq'ub Aprash with twelve thousand select horsemen rushed at the King. And so atrocious was the fight that all of the two hundred soldiers, picked out by the King, were slain, the exception being the King and three horsemen. The King's horse fell, struck by the spear of Q'ara-Sunghur, and seeing this, the Georgians intensified the

fight, and most of the Egyptians were destroyed, and the King, whose horse was killed under him, continued to fight powerfully. Seeing the King fighting on foot, Abash, Sikdur's son, gave him his own horse. As the Georgians caught sight of their King on horseback again, they took heart and put to flight Q'ara-Sunghur and Iaq'ub with all twelve thousand of his people. But before that the *noins* and the Tatars had fled, Mangu-Demur himself with all his troops turned back. The exhausted Georgians also retreated. By Divine Providence, the King was spared, though most of the Georgians were slain. And Mangu-Demur and the King came before Abagha.

Abagha being on a hunt, and waiting for the news of the battle, met on his way a fugitive Tatar. The Tatar recounted in his own language the stories of their commanders in sweet verses. Of Alinaq', he said: "He attacked like a falcon in the sky." He compared Mangu-Demur with a battering ram, Ebagan, Sirmon's son – with a rushing tiger, Ias-Bugha – with a bull, Bugha – with a buffalo, and Tigna – with a she-goat. And of the Georgian King he said in his language the following: "Tengri metu kaurkurba, bughar metu builghaji," which means: "He thundered about like God, and raged like a camel."

And when the Georgians appeared before the Khan, he honored the King and sent him home. Then Abagha decided to start a campaign to avenge the Sultan. His brother, Mangu-Demur, died, and a little later *atabag* Sadun died, and the King granted his estates to his son Khut'lubugha and raised him to the rank of *sp'asp'et'*.

And in a short time Abagha, too, died, and Abagha's brother Ahmad, who had no proper talents for governing, was made the Khan of *noins*. Then the King set out for the Horde to present himself to Ahmad; and Ahmad welcomed him and paid him proper respect. During his stay there the King married his daughter Rusudan to the son of the great Bugha, which greatly angered Katholikos Nik'oloz, who severely censured him and promised ample and just punishment on the Lord's part. For at the time of Dimit'ri's sojourn there, Khan Ahmad committed an evil deed, ordering to put to death his brother Q'onghard, whom he brought from Greece. Two brothers, sons of Abulet, who some time before that fled from Sadun were executed together with Q'onghard. Khut'lubugha, son of Sadun, killed them.

37. King Dimit'ri, a kind ruler till that time, adorned by the royal scepter, merciful and just, who cared about monks and churches, a careful governor for all the ranks, religious as well as humanitarian, deviated from the path of perfection, mixing with the heathen and acquiring their practices. Seized by insatiable desire and voluptuousness, and following the fancies of his heart he took three wives: one – the daughter of Beka, and (two) others. Like Solomon, he was seduced by women, and once full of virtue, he turned to evil. And Katholikos Nik'oloz edified, reprimanded and raged at him time and again, but could not persuade him. So he resigned from the rank of Katholikos, and blessed as Katholikos the King's best man at his wedding, Abraham. The old man retreated to his estate, and lived there in toiling and fasting and devoting himself to night vigils and prayers for the poor.

The monk Basil came at this time from the Holy Mountain; he was the uncle of Katholikos Euphemius, who led a God-pleasing life and was blessed with the gift of foretelling. Standing before King Dimit'ri with the revelation of the Holy Mother of God, he, like an apostle, passionately

denounced him, attacking his lawless marriages, and educated him about holiness, reminding him that we all dwell in God's temple, and how necessary it is to stay pure, and that Dimit'ri brought adultery into God's immaculate temple; and he talked of acquisition by wretched of priceless pearls, of praying, fasting, of the necessity to show mercy to poor, of charity and generosity, incompatible with flows of muck and marches of filth. He instructed him as follows: "If you renounce your impious marriage, I will vouch for your succeeding with your gentle reign." And he exhorted the nobles, condemning their impiety, and denounced many, for he knew of their secret passions. This blissful monk shone with such virtues. And because he failed to convince the King, who ignored his words, he came before him and his nobles: "If I express it in my own way, like a false prophet seducing a pilgrim, who is sent by Rehoboam, the son of Naboth(ians), and not by the Holy Mother of God, you can take me for one that is versed in a false faith. But I am sent here by the Holy Mother of God to instruct you, before your deeds, your prayers and your steps become foul, and if you do not reject your dissolute marriages, or if you ignore my words, you will perish cruelly and ingloriously at the hands of a tyrant, and you will be deprived of your kingdom, and your children will be dissipated, and another man will seize your kingdom, and your treasures will be plundered. Lo! I take my leave." The King, astonished, did not answer him, for he was respectful of holy people. 5 10 15

In those days P'imen Salos stood out; he had retreated from Gareji and settled in one of the caves in Belakani. He converted to Christianity some heathen tribes of Leks, who now live by the Christian faith.<sup>50</sup> Together with him the great zealot Anton Naokhrebilis-dze, a Meskhi by birth, was outstanding. 20

But now let us return to Ahmad. On the order of Ahmad, his brother, Kongard, was murdered. The *noins*, sitting in Khorasan, having seen such lawlessness, renounced Ahmad and made Arghun the son of Khan Abagha, the new Khan. Learning of this Ahmad called his army and summoned the King with his troops to accompany him to Khorasan to wage war with Khan Arghun. And the King took all his forces with him, along with *mandat'urtukhutsesi* Ivane, son of Shanshe, and *amirsp'asalar* Khut'lubugha, Sadun's son. And they set out and crossed Iraq and entered into the domain of Arghun. Seeing the numerical strength of the invading army, Arghun did not dare offer resistance, but fled and took refuge in the fortress that is called Kalas, to which Khan Abagha laid siege, rounding it from behind. Feeling helpless, Arghun begged Ahmad not to blame him and spare him, and take an oath of not harming him in any way, so that he could appear before him. And Ahmad listened to him, and assured him by taking an oath, for Ahmad had adopted the faith of Persians. And Arghun left the fortress and came before his uncle, and they made peace with each other. But when they went through Khorasan, there were some bands of lawless and mischievous people, the enemies of Christians, who murdered Christians as a positive deed, for such was the teaching of the godless Mohammed, who inscribed the evil words in the Koran: "If you kill a Christian, you will achieve Paradise, and if you are killed by them, you will still reach there." That is why that godless band was formed, and wherever they found Georgians, alone or in small numbers, they would murder them. 25 30 35

The son of Beka of Surami – Rat'i, learned of this and being a fine young man, set out with sixty men and discovered a band of about three hundred men in the mountains. He fell upon them and a fierce fight took place. In the very first clash, they put them to flight, and most of them were slain; 40

others he brought to the King, for which the King honored him and presented him with many gifts. They departed and reached Here and Q'azvin. The Khan was grateful to the King for his participation in the Khorasan campaign and showed him great honor and gave him all the Georgian *mtavaris*. The Khan departed for home and appeared victorious before his spouse. He took the King with him, but  
5 his nephew, Arghun, he left in Here, and all the *noins* he left with Arghun; and he told Alinaq' and the other *noins* to wait a little and then kill Arghun. The *noins* remained with Arghun, and the great Bugha and Ias-Bugha of the Iorad family decided to make Arghun, son of Abagha, Khan, and to kill Ahmad. And so they did. Quickly coming in the night they brought out Alinaq', sleeping in the tent, and killed him. And at daybreak they declared Arghun the Khan and set out in pursuit of Ahmad. He  
10 came in his Horde to Uzhan, where they caught him and strangled him with prayer ropes.

38. They told King Dimit'ri to break with Ahmad, and the King followed this advice and appeared before Khan Arghun. Arghun gratefully welcomed him and granted him his whole kingdom and the house of *atabag* Avag, which was owned by Sahib-Divan, for the Khan was in the hands of Bugha, and Bugha was the King's friend and relative. He came home victorious and in peace, and he sent  
15 his son, the younger David, to the *atabag's* house, to be educated and prepared for his princely status. So day by day, his kingdom became stronger, and Katholicos Abraham kept in his hands the helm of the Catholic Church, for he was an excellent man who accomplished good deeds and cared well for the affairs of the kingdom.

King Dimit'ri had children from his Queen, the daughter of the Emperor of Trabzon: the first born  
20 was David, then came Vakht'ang, Lasha and Manovel, and a daughter, Rusudan; and from the Tatar woman – two sons: Baidu, Iadgar and a daughter, Jigda. Beka's daughter, Natel, gave birth to her only son Giorgi, who became king after his brothers and who exceeded in greatness all the Kings that followed him, because he was the only son of his mother. It is said that solitude adorns a pearl, so Giorgi achieved superiority over all the men of his time, not only over the kings, but other people  
25 in general. Dimit'ri acquired great riches, surpassing those that he received from his father, and he served Khan Arghun, for he was seconded by the great *noin* Bugha, to whom the Khan granted the honor of being Chingizid, which for them is the greatest of all honors.

The Darubandians<sup>51</sup> broke with the Khan, and the Khan advanced against Daruband and summoned King Dimit'ri, who set out with him. Together they entered Daruband. And the Darubandians  
30 could not stand their ground and fled to the acropolis of their fortress, which they called Aniq'.<sup>52</sup> The attackers surrounded them, but inflicting no harm. Then Khan Arghun ordered the King to give them battle, because he was rather strong. Arming themselves, the King and his troops surrounded the fortress and stormed it, and Rat'i, Bugha's son, breached it before the others. They seized the fortress, slew their chiefs, captured the citizens, seized treasures and their goods, and burned down  
35 the fortress. The Khan saw all this. He felt animosity towards the King. He ordered him to give him (some) precious chain and the King gave it to him at once, and they parted for home.

The time passed, and at the coming of the new year, which they call *urdsing* in Tatar, and which falls on the fifteenth March, the Khan sent the *noins* to capture Bugha, and they took him prisoner, seized all his treasures and presented him before the Khan, who ordered to put him and his son to  
40 death without any further investigation. They executed Bugha and his entire household. The Khan

sent many people everywhere – to Greece, Sham and Khorasan, and killed many grand *noins*. There was execution and destruction of the *noins* everywhere.

The Khan sent an envoy to summon the King, and the King visited the Horde. Learning of the execution of Bugha, the King grieved immensely. And he called for Katholikos Abraham and the bishops, priests and monks of the deserts of Gareji and all the chiefs of his kingdom. They gathered before him; he sat on the throne and they took their seats. The King opened his lips and said: “Listen to me Katholikos and officials of my Kingdom. When my father passed away, I was a little boy; it was the time of the Tatars’ dominance. But the Lord Almighty, our Master Jesus Christ and the Holy Mother of God, whose lot we are, and who granted us the Cross of Honor, protected me and brought me to a mature age and granted me my reign, and the scepter and porphyry. With your help, I am ruling now. But now the Khan is enraged, he destroyed all his chiefs and now calls me to him. Knowing of his atrocities, I am inclined to refuse to go to the Horde, and instead hide in the mountains and strongholds to save my life. But my whole kingdom lies defenseless before him. Look, how many Christian lives will be destroyed and taken captive, and the churches defiled and ravaged, and the icons destroyed and crosses pulled down. But if I go to the Khan, then, I am perfectly sure he will kill me. And now consider this affair with your wisdom. Now what I think: varied is our life and troubling, changeable and temporal, our days will disappear like dreams and ghosts, and our departure from this world is certain and pressing. What is the use of my life, if many lives will perish because of me, and I will leave this world loaded with sins. I am willing to appear before the Khan, and let everything be according to the will of God. If they put me to death, the country will escape disaster.”

Hearing this, the Katholikos and the bishops, the spiritual fathers and nobles wondered at the King, who was prepared to sacrifice his life for his people and gave him the following answer: “Our King! Nobody can replace you. The Lord will not allow the Tatars to kill you. The country will be ruined and your children dispersed. And if the country remains, who will replace you? Our advice to you is to go to the strongholds of Mtiuleti, or Abkhazia, as did your father; there is no reason for you to sacrifice yourself. We are all firmly in accord about that.”<sup>53</sup>

Hearing this, the King said: “You are saying that, because of your fidelity and love for me, but I feel sorry for the innocent people, doomed to be killed like sheep, and there will be no comfort for them. I will give my life for my people, and I will accept this demand to go to the Horde”. Then they started up in amazement, and Katholikos Abraham said: “It is not right, oh King, to sacrifice your life, for many kings happened to escape and defend themselves. But now, if you will give up your life for your people, we, all of us, the bishops, will take on your sins upon ourselves, and we will testify before the Lord to canonize you, as the Sovereign Lord says in the Gospel: “There is no love for a man greater than to give up his life for his neighbor.” And if it is good to sacrifice your life for one of your neighbors, then how much more good is in saving innumerable lives.”

39. Hearing the Katholikos’ words, the King rejoiced and decided to go to the Horde in great glory and with treasures; he was accompanied by Katholikos Abraham. He appointed places of residence for his children. And all the *mtavaris*, who did not accompany him, he entrusted with the care of his children, and sent some of them to Mtiuleti, and others – to K’akheti. He sent his

youngest son, Giorgi, to T'ao, to Ishkhani fortress, in Asp'aresheni, and departed for the Horde. As he entered the lands of Khuashak, which belonged to the Avag's daughter, he was met by his son David, whom he took with him, so as to disperse the doubts of the Khan and convince him of his good disposition towards him.

5 They approached the Horde. But the Khan thought that the King would not come to him, so he sent one *noin*, by the name of Tukul, the son of Ias-Bugha, to bring him the King. And he met the King on his way (to the Horde), took away from him all his things and belongings, seized the King and presented him to Khan Arghun. And the Khan put him in prison. The Khan thought that if he destroyed the King, there would be nobody worthy to reign, but how could he let the supporter and  
10 co-plotter against Bugha to go free.

But Khut'lubugha told him: "Do not worry about that, for I will bring you the son of the King of the Abkhazians, by name of Vakht'ang; grant him the kingdom and both kingdoms will be under your dominion." The Khan listened favorably to these words and sent Khut'lubugha in Imereti to King David and promised to grant his son Vakht'ang the throne, and his sister, Oljat, as spouse.

15 When Khut'lubugha set out for Imereti, they ordered King Dimit'ri to make an inventory of all his riches, his storerooms, cattle and sheep and all his possessions. For the King and his *mtavaris* were imprisoned, and only Catolicos Abraham remained free. He had to obey, and he counted everything he had, all his plentiful possessions. The Khan sent a man who took everything, leaving nothing; the townsfolk knew of his treasures and they betrayed him, but they say that the son of Khoja-Aziz,  
20 whose father was executed by King David, had a hand in it; that he and Khut'lubugha conspired together against the King and brought to the Khan all the King's treasury. The Khan wondered, and his anger subsided a little, and he began to think of doing no harm to him. Seeing this, the King's viziers said to him: "So, now your fate is in your own hands. In the night they will bring you some fast horses, go, flee from him, for there is no substitute for your soul." And the King said: "Look, from  
25 the very beginning I thought of my death, and I laid my life and my soul down for my people. But if I escape now, innocent people will perish. What is the use for me in gaining the whole world and losing my soul by doing so." And he did not heed the advice of his *mtavaris*.

Khut'lubugha returned from Likht-Imerethi, and reported to the Khan: "King David will send you his son and his Abkhazian army at your service." Hearing this, the Khan ordered King Dimit'ri to  
30 be taken into custody, and two days later they seized the King and, separately, his son, the boy David. He was accompanied by the hieromonk Mose, who was brought with him. They beat the King with a stick, and everybody thought that he would not be executed, because it was the Khan's custom, that if a person was beaten with a stick, he would not be put to death. However his heart was not assuaged. They dragged the King to the house of trial, which they called a *divankhan* and  
35 questioned him, as to whether he was aware of the intentions of Bugha Chingishan, but found no fault. A certain *noin* called T'oghan came before the Khan with the request not to execute the King, but the Khan did not heed his request. And then twelve horsemen of the Khan's came in order to take Dimit'ri and put him to death. The King realized everything, though he joyfully greeted the Georgian *mtavaris*, for all of them came to encourage the King, and Khut'lubugha was also there.  
40 And the King told him: "Intercede for me with the Khan if you can, before my death. If you have no

desire to do this, then at least take care of my son, little David, so that they will not kill him while the Khan's heart is full of wrath. He and all the *mtavaris* began to weep and went out. The King prayed and received communion, partaking of the blood and flesh of our Master Jesus Christ. And they seated him on the horse and took him off at a mile's distance from there. And he asked the villains to allow him to pray a little. And he prayed in tears that were streaming on the ground; and then he bowed his head. And that was the awful day, the day of disaster, how could these reprobates allow themselves to do such thing to the anointed sovereign. They cut off his head. 5

But the glory of God descended upon His anointed servant, for the sun thoroughly darkened its disc and a great darkness covered the earth, and astonished all the heathens. It was ten o'clock and the earth remained in dark till the evening, as (it happened) for the Lord that suffered for the life of this world, so for this blessed King, who was a martyr for Georgia, in order that people could see that glorious are those, anointed by God. It was the third Saturday of the Holy Fast, the twelfth day of the month that Hebrews call *nisan*, and we call March. 10

And they satisfied the grudge in their hearts, but the wrath continued to kindle in them, for they seized the boy David and brought him to *noin* T'oghachar, who was the commander of the army. That night, the night of heavy hearts, they brought the boy David in the tent to murder him, but that did not happen. At daybreak the priest Mose, who never parted with David for all this time, walked out secretly and coming to T'oghachar said to him: "They are going to put David to death." And T'oghachar rushed to the Khan and told him of the innocence of David: "Why do you need the death of a sinless boy? Grant him to me." The Khan listened to him and gave him David; and he took him to his house and entrusted him to his *khoja*, who later became *sahib-divan*. 15 20

And they guarded for many days the honorable remains of King Dimit'ri so as not to allow the Georgians to take them. And the prediction of Basil Mtats'mindeli was fulfilled. There were many Georgian nobles there, but nobody dared to steal the King's remains. Then the Katholikos and Mose hired some people, Mose himself guiding them; they stole the remains in the night. Then, by the will of God, some people from Tbilisi appeared, who carried fish; and with the fish they took also the King's remains, and brought them to Mtskheta and buried them there in their burial place. 25

And while all these events were taking place, *noin* T'oghachar securely guarded David, son of Dimit'ri, and the Queen, and the other wives of the King, remained hidden. Sorghal went to his father's house in Tataria and Beka's daughter retreated with her father to Samtskhe; Vakht'ang stayed in Mtiuleti. The Khan gave the Queen Skoretiskhevi in allowance, and left her two little sons, Manovel and Lasha, with her. And her two sons, Baidu and Iadgar, went with Sorghal to her parental house. The country remained kingless. 30

The Khan called Khut'lubugha and told him: "So, I have exterminated all my enemies, as well as your enemy, Dimit'ri, and now there is no king in Georgia. Keep your word, bring me the son of the King of the Abkhazians and let him be the King. I will grant you the whole of Georgia and govern it according to your own judgment."<sup>54</sup> Khut'lubugha appeared before King David. And as soon as King David beheld Khut'lubugha, he called his army and taking with him his son Vakht'ang, hurried to meet him. They came to T'asisk'ari, in the field of Kvishkheti. The son of *noin* Sirmon, Q'orchibal, and Q'urumchi, son of Alinaq', who was in the mountains of Javakheti, situated between Art'ani and 35 40

Samtskhe, were there too, and they summoned all the nobles of Georgia and took an oath of fidelity. And the King gave over his son and brought many of his *tavadis* to accompany him. They departed, in haste, and King David retreated to Kutaisi. They appeared before Khan Arghun. Seeing Vakht'ang, the Khan felt a fondness for him because of his goodness, for he had a perfect body and beautiful face, was graceful, merciful, a good adviser, and versed in all affairs. To this Vakht'ang he granted the entire Georgian kingdom and gave his own sister Oljat, as a wife; and they came to Tbilisi.

## VI

40. And the Katholikos, bishops and *mtavaris* gathered together and placed the king's crown on his head, enthroned him and performed a rite of blessing. And he took possession of the whole of Georgia from Nik'opsia to Daruband, with the exception of the estates of Beka Jaq'eli from Tsikhisjvari; and the whole population of Georgia rejoiced at having for their ruler an honorable man of the King's family, godly, a righteous judge, stately and brave, and gifted with an exceptional military disposition. He honored Khut'lubugha with both the ranks of *atabag* and *amirsp'asalar*, and the right to govern the kingdom.

David remained in Tataria, with *noin* T'oghachar, in trouble and under pressure; the Queen, his mother, remained in Skoreti, and the other brothers had dispersed all over the country. His youngest brother, Giorgi, whose mother was Beka's daughter, was brought up by his grandfather, Beka, and he was as a result better than any other man, to which the following bears witness.

After two years passed, a terrible disease struck Khan Arghun; all his members withered away and his flesh began to putrefy, his bones crumbled and his body rotted; his appearance was loathsome and horrid and he looked almost dead. Being sick, Arghun wished to see Khut'lubugha in order to make David and his successors kings; he demanded the *noins* to deprive Vakht'ang of the kingdom. T'oghachar helped David, and one Ovsetian prince by the name of Parejan assisted him eagerly. An assembly was called on the question as to who should reign. Some of the Georgian nobles did not want David to rule, for they were firmly devoted to Vakht'ang. So they did not give David the kingdom, though they granted him some villages and lands.

And because the Heavenly wrath that fell upon Arghun's head and the disease lasted for four months, rotting from head to foot he annoyed the *noins*. Colluding, they fell upon Arghun and strangled him in his own tent at the same time and on the same day – the twelfth of March – that the worthy and blessed martyr Dimit'ri, anointed by the Lord, was executed. A miracle happened; the evil disease struck Arghun, because so much innocent blood had been spilt by him, and he had dared to lift his hand against God's Vicar.

Arghun died, and all his associates, who were his accomplices in the murder of the King, were exterminated. And now the power passed to David, and the *noins* were on his side. But Vakht'ang also possessed the kingdom firmly.

The *noins* enthroned Khan Keghatu-Koun, Arghun's brother, and entrusted him with the Khandom. He became fond of Vakht'ang, for he believed that because of him Arghun had become a victim of some cruel wrath. While all this was taking place King Vakht'ang caught some trifling illness, and he took to bed and passed away after only three years of his reign, which was filled and adorned with godly and humanistic deeds, for he had a kind and wise tutor – Parsman's son. Learning of Vakht'ang's fate, David was upset, for he was a kind young man, and he mourned him according to the existing custom; he rendered him due homage and sent him to Gelati and buried him in the royal burial place. When King David, his father, learned of the death of his cherished son Vakht'ang, who was loved by everybody, he was seized by unfathomable pain and grief. The sorrow took possession of him so deeply that he could not find joy in anything, and several years later he too passed away, after a long and honest life. He left three sons: his firstborn, Constantine, the second Michael, and the youngest, Alexander, who was borne by the Queen, the daughter of the great Palaiologos, who commanded Constantinople and Greece. The kingdom was taken by Constantine by the right of seniority, but his accession was opposed by his brother Michael, who seized the lands of Rach'a and Argveti. The kingdom was falling apart and there was no peace in the country until they died, for every time they made a truce, they broke it instantly. 5 10 15

41. We now return to the subject of rebels. As soon as Keghatu ascended the throne, the town of T'unghuzalo abandoned his protection. Because Keghatu left Greece, they assumed that the Khan had no time for them and defected from him. The Khan summoned his army, and David, son of Dimit'ri, and the *mtavaris* of Kartli, and entrusted *noin* Sikdur with his throne, wife and concubines. Khut'lubugha and other nobles of Georgia he placed in Mughan, for he was afraid of an invasion by Berka's army. Then he departed, taking with him David, son of Dimit'ri. Reaching T'unghuzalo town, they laid siege to it for four months, but inflicted no harm upon it. On the fifth month, they started decisive actions. David and a small number of Georgians seized the town and entered it. In one of the side streets they were accosted by Christians, who entreated David to have mercy on them and asked for protection from the Khan. David listened to them and assigned them guards, and protected them, and after taking *kharaj* and innumerable valuables, he returned. 20 25

During Parejan's sojourn there, the Ovses started to ravage, destroy and imprison the people of Kartli. They seized the town of Gori. Then all the Kartlians gathered before Hamada, son of Beka, the *eristavi* of Kartli, and laid siege to Gori. There were many battles inside the town, and many died, the Ovses as well as the Kartlians, and they burned the town to the ground. When it became quite unbearable, the defenders let down a man from the wall by rope and sent him to the Tatars, who were stationed in Mukhrani and asked for help. The Tatars came as mediators and established peace. And so began the enmity between Kartlians and Ovses until the brilliant among the kings, the great and glorious Giorgi, drove the Ovses away and destroyed them.<sup>55</sup> As they returned back, the Khan called for David and told him: "Because you have put your life in my service and faithfully stay by my side, I grant you your kingdom and the right to reign over it." And he sent him to Tbilisi and seated him on the throne of his father. He assigned the Georgian army to accompany him, including Shanshe and Khut'lubugha and all the other nobles. He summoned Beka from Samtskhe, but Beka did not want to come, for he had advanced (in his career) and did not appear eagerly neither 30 35 40

before the Khan, nor before the King. He sent to him his firstborn son, Sargis, the *amirsp'asalar* of Samtskhe, and all the treasures which King Dimit'ri had entrusted him upon an oath, including the precious belt. Sargis came and delivered to him everything in full. They enthroned the King and Katholicos Abraham and the bishops blessed him.

5 And the Khan gave him (as wife) his sister Oljat, who had been married to Vakht'ang. David took possession of the whole kingdom of his father Dimit'ri, with the exception of Samtskhe – Beka's estates. But Beka kept King David in respect, sending him many gifts and presents. David spent most of his time at the treasury. Though the *mtavari* of the Ovses, Parejan, served the King faithfully, there was enmity between the Kartlians and the Ovses; they were so uncompromising that each did  
10 not miss the opportunity to kill the other. Once the Ovses went to trade in the town, and on their way back they met a beggar. Giving him alms, two Ovses, Satkhiz and Uzurbeg, said to him: "Poor man, pray to God that today we will have an opportunity to cross our swords with Beka of Surami." Then walking a little further they met Rat'i, unarmed, with a small group of attendants, accompanying him on his hunt. The Ovses fell on him; he put out his shield and standing in the narrow pass of the river  
15 brought down, his sword on the Ovse's helmet, split it and killed the Ovse dead. Then it was the turn of Uzurbeg, but Rat'i thrust his sword in his side, which was covered with chain mail, ripped it open and brought him down, and his servants finished him off. Seeing this, the other Ovses took flight. And so says the Prophet: "God destroys arrogant people;" others say: "Let God destroy insidious lips and malevolent tongues."

20 Tukul's herald appeared before King David. David came to see Tukul, who was camped in the mountains of Ararat. Seeing King David, Tukul felt respect and fondness for him. And he expressed his wish by taking oaths to establish a loving union between them. After establishing unity, the King returned home and rendered up Dmanisi, which was owned by Khut'lubugha, brother of Mangasar.

42. After some time the *noins* left, fleeing from Tukul, and among them Navroz, son of the  
25 great Arghun, who was manly, strong, stately, active and, above all, fearless, and Q'urumchi, son of Alinaq', whose brother, Bugha, was killed by Tukul. They came to Khorasan to koun Q'azan, son of Arghun, who owned Khorasan from his father's side. They all gathered together and set out to battle with Baidu. But learning of the intent of Q'azan, Baidu called his troops, and Tukul, and not waiting for King David, they swiftly set out. And here again God protected David, for nothing happened to  
30 him. The armies closed in with one other by the small town of Zangan, face to face, and were equal in their success; they overran each other and then separated. Q'azan was not with them, having sent Navroz and Khut'lush. Navroz was caught, and Jalair gave fierce battle. Q'azan left Khorasan.

Navroz implored Tukul to set him free, swearing that he would deliver Q'azan to him bound. Tukul believed him and let him go. And when he returned to Q'azan, he tied up a copper kettle and  
35 sent it to Tukul, for in Turkish a kettle is called "q'azan." The kettle arrived tied up with ropes. Tukul wondered, and grieved, for he had already reached the mountains of Ararat.

Q'azan advanced secretly with a larger army and attacked Baidu in Uzhan, and they caught him. He was brought to Q'azan and strangled, and many *noins* as well. And here, too, the Lord protected King David. Learning of the death of Khan Baidu, Tukul fled and came to Samtskhe to Beka, who  
40 reigned from T'asisk'ari to K'arnukalaki. And he sent his son to King David, entrusting him with the

King. And as Q'azan entered Adarbadagan, which is Tavrezh, he sent more than once an envoy to King David and Beka, asking them to deliver Tukul and his son to him. However, they did not do it, but applied all their efforts to ensure that Q'azan would forgive them. Q'azan gave his word and guaranteed their safety, and they gave up Tukul. Learning of the departure of Tukul to the Horde, Q'urumchi appeared before Q'azan's envoy in Nakhiduri, took Tukul away and killed him, in revenge for the execution of his brother Bugha. King David handed over his son to him and many treasures with which he graciously entrusted the Ovsetian *mtavari*, Parejan, and which were kept in At'eni fortress. Khan Q'azan was grateful to him for that but the King did not dare to go to the Horde, for Navroz, son of Arghun-Agha was the enemy of Christians in general; he invited those who wanted to reject their faith and converted them to the Muslim faith without informing Khan Q'azan. But he was weakened by this malice and died maliciously because of it, which the following words testify to.

Navroz had been raised high and ruled without any reference to the Khan; he was an enemy to Christians, preparing himself to destroy them thoroughly and demolish their churches in Tavrezh and all the other towns. And he brought to him the bishop of the town of Maragha, Nasrani by origin and faith, who was a merciful and fine-looking man, respected by the first Khans and given the nickname "Father." He was seized and subjected to much beating and all kinds of abuses, and persuaded to give up his faith. But he resisted and endured the insults of Mohammed and the faith preached by him. And he was subjected to punishment by exorie, for he was very old.

Added to this was another evil: Navroz sent a rascal from his tribe to devastate the churches all over Georgia; first to ravage the dwelling place of Vardzia Holy Mother of God, and to take away all he could find in Georgia. He expected to find in Vardzia countless treasures, gold and silver, precious stones and a multitude of pearls. Reaching Nakhchevan, he began pillaging and destroying churches. But the wrath of the Vardzian Mother of God fell upon him. As he came to outrage the Vardzian Holy Mother of God and pull down the Precious Cross, he was struck by thunder and lightning, which incinerated him so that he was burned to ashes including his bones. And so the Vardzian Mother of God, and the place of her dwelling, was miraculously protected.

The wrath of God fell upon Navroz's head, for Khan Q'azan became angry with him for his iniquitous and malicious deeds. The Khan was a rather virtuous man without malice; he was a law giver, more so than any other Khan before him, to the extent that he ordered that a chain be hung on two poles covered with rattles, so that the wretched and infirm, and those not favored with an appearance before the Khan, including *noins* coming to see him, all shook the poles and the chain, and the Khan hearing the sound of the rattles would remember how unfortunate those wretched and despicable people were; he judged them himself face to face. He loved justice so much that there was no lawlessness or injustice for the poor in his days. That is why the damned Navroz fled to Khorasan. He was pursued by Khan Khut'lusha, who overtook him and ordered to kill him, along with his son, and all his kin. And his memory was wiped from the earth; as it is written: "Let the ungodly man perish, so that he shall not see the glory of God." And his memory vanished and this calmed the Tatars. Khan Q'azan began to govern the country fairly and with a kind heart.

Khan Q'azan sent a messenger to King David calling him to his side.<sup>56</sup> Hurriedly preparing himself David advanced to K'akheti and Hereti. The nobles and *aznauris* of Er-K'akhi appeared

before King David, as well as *eristavi* Samadavla, a man gifted with all kinds of military virtues and a chosen archer, like the Jew Mosomakhos, or the chosen Neop't'olemeos P'ighas, glorious tutor of the Myrmidons. The King remained in Hereti for a little time consulting with the viziers: "Should I go to the Horde or not?" The viziers advised him to go, but the King would not listen to them and left, for he feared to meet the Khan. Then he went to Mtiuleti and, retreating to Zhinovani, erected fortifications and deployed defenders there.

43. King David stayed in Mtiuleti and sent his younger brother Vakht'ang as an envoy to the grandson of the great Khan Bato, and promised to show the way to the Khan; and the Khan welcomed him kindly and promised him estates and much riches. As soon as the Khan had learned of David's apostasy he sent against him his chief commander Khut'lusha, who was called Beglarbeg, with a great army. They came before Tbilisi. They sent an envoy to King David and asked for reliable and trustworthy people, and proposed a peace agreement, ensuring David's loyalty to Q'azan, and no siding with his enemies. David sent Katholikos Abraham, Ivane of Bursa, and Q'adi of Tbilisi, asked for hostages, and promised to take an oath. They swore according to their faith and gave as hostages Khut'lusha's son Sibuch, the brother of Q'urumchi – Arpa and the children of other *noins*. And they gave him also the Khan's seal and guarantee of his security. He went to see them and promised to go to the Horde. Khut'lusha welcomed him kindly and reconciled with him. Then David returned home, gave the hostages gifts and let them go.

When the spring came, King David was summoned to the Horde, but being afraid, he did not go. He sent his brother Baidu to Khan Tokhta. Learning of this, Khan Q'azan again sent his chief commander Khut'lusha with a massive army. They came to Somkhiti and addressed the King, proposing him to appear before them and promising many gifts. And again David sent the Katholikos Abraham, Qadi of Tbilisi and Ivane of Bursa, promising to come later in person. Realizing that he was just gaining time, the Tatars caught Ivane of Bursa and killed him, but let the Katholikos and Qadi go. They began preparing for an invasion of Mtiuleti. They ravaged Somkhiti, Kartli, Trialeti, Erts'o and camped in Mukhrani, Kherk'i, Bazaleti, Erts'o and Tianeti, and there was no place large enough for their camp; they plundered Kartli and all the other lands. They took numberless captives, and put to sword every man they could find; the country was given to destruction because of our sins.

The same year an evil star appeared in the North, spear-shaped, and hung there for about four months; every night this star was visible and they said: "It is an omen of destruction by spear."

The Tatars again proposed a peace agreement with the King and sent an envoy to him with the proposal for him to take an oath of loyalty to the Khan, and not to allow passage to the great Khan Tokhta, Bato's grandson; if he agreed, they would let him remain and defend his Kingdom. They swore on this and assured each other, and David sent his mother, the Queen, and his younger brother, Manovel, and Katholikos Abraham and the Queen, the King's spouse, Oljat, to settle all his affairs. Again peace came to the country.

As the winter passed and the spring came, they sent a messenger to the King, to learn whether he remained faithful to the Khan. The messenger found out that David had sent Baidu to Khan Tokhta and had given him passage. The messenger informed the Khan. Angered, the Khan sent Q'urumchi

and Erinj from his house, along with Shanshe Mkhargrdzeli, against David. They appealed to David's younger brother, Giorgi, to whom Beka's daughter had given birth. Giorgi was her only-begotten son, and he was like a unicorn, for no woman could give birth to another like him, as the following words show.

Giorgi lived in the house of Beka; Beka rose high, and owned (the lands) from T'asisk'ari to Sp'eri and further down to the sea, including Samtkhe, Ach'ara, Shavsheti, K'larjeti, Nigaliskhevi and Ch'aneti, all granted to him by the Greek King Comnenus K'ir Mikhail, who married Beka's daughter. He was also in possession of the greater part of T'ao, Art'aani, K'ola, K'arnipora and K'ari, and the lands and fortresses inside them, and Art'anuji and twelve deserts of K'larjeti, and the` eminent *aznauris* and monasteries, everything he had by him. He paid *kharaj* to the Khan and assisted him with his troops. And they asked him to give them the boy Giorgi in order to make him the King of Kartli in place of David, his brother; and he did this, sending them Giorgi and a large army to accompany him. They made him a King. And though he was underage, they granted him royal immunity. 5 10

44. And the small boy Giorgi was King in Tbilisi. And when the spring came, Khan Q'azan again sent Khut'lusha with a powerful army, and many other *noins*. And they camped in the same places. They ravaged Kartli with even greater malice. 15

King David was in Khada. Then Shalva from Kueniplevi fled from the King with all the great gifts that had been given to him. He forgot all the favors granted by the King and went to *noin* Khut'lusha. Khut'lusha rejoiced and welcomed him with honors and appointed him a guide. They left on the Tskhrazmiskhevi road and over the mountain between Tskhavat'i and Tskhrazmiskhevi, which is Lomisa. 20

When David learned of the treachery of Shalva from Kueniplevi, he retreated to Tsik'are, for Tsik'are was impregnable. Khut'lusha descended to Khada, crossed the ravine and made his way to Gueleti, for they thought that King David was there. They surrounded the village of St'epants'minda. The villagers, putting their trust in God, reinforced their position; and the foremost among the Tatars were Shalva from Kueniplevi, the Ovsetian *mtavari* Baq'atar and the Tatar Baan Tanghut, who stood in Mukhrani. When they realized that they could not overpower the defenders of St'epants'minda, and that the King was not there, they asked the besieged for some supplies. The defenders of St'epants'minda gave it them. Then they broke their camp and ascended Khada. The King was in Tsik'are. Hamada of Surami, the son of *amirejib* Abaz, Ch'ila, and the *aznauris* from Kartli and Somkhiti affirmed their loyalty to the King, displaying complete unanimity. 25 30

Khut'lusha learned that the King was in Tsik'are, and divided his army. Some he sent through Tskhavat'i by a difficult road, to invade Tsik'are, which in fact was practically impossible. The other part of the army descended from the mountains, advanced along the Tskhavat'i road and entered Tskhavat'i. Learning of this, the King sent some of his troops to engage in battle, in which many Tatars were destroyed; about five hundred men entered a very slender pass and could not escape because of its narrowness. David's troops ambushed five hundred Tatars, killed many, and sent the others to King David; the remaining few escaped. The King's troops crossed the mountain, which is situated in the middle of Khada facing Tsik'are, and launched a powerful battle. The King's 35 40

troops, the Khadians and select fighters from Khevi, fought excellently. Yet more Tatars were killed by the Mtiulis, for they were light-footed, and horsemen could not fight there. The Tatars were forced to defend themselves on foot; they were assisted by Shanshe, son of Ivane, by the Ovses who had settled in Gori, by the Meskhi soldiers sent there by the *mtavari* of Samtskhe – Beka, and  
5 by the Torels, the Tmogvians and the T'aoians. The battle continued until sunset. Because of the narrowness of the gorge the adversaries did not get entangled with one other, and the Tatars from Khada were put to flight.

God assisted the King, for the army that came from Tskhava't'i retreated. About five hundred men gathered, and Khut'lusha too had suffered great losses. He realized the firmness of the country and the impossibility of seizing Tsik'are. He moved at night along the Lomistavi road, unexpectedly  
10 invaded Kartli and killed anybody who remained there, or took them captive. They ravaged Kartli and returned to Khan Q'azan.

In the spring, Khut'lusha, ordered by the Khan, returned with a still greater army. He approached Tbilisi, and intended to invade Mtiuleti. Learning of this, the nobles of the kingdom were terrified and began to look for the ways how to escape or evade the Tatars. People came to King David and suggested him to go before the Khan and obtain from him a promise of security. The King listened to them and decided to go to the Horde; he asked for peace and a promise of security. The Khan rejoiced greatly and promised him security and protection. If he could manage to see the Khan, he would be sent back in peace. In all this he was assured by Ivane from Bursa. With these words,  
15 Ivane came before the King. Seeing firmness among the Kartlians, and the Er-K'akhs, the King rejoiced; and he was urged to go and even proposed to take hostages: "Khut'lusha is a reliable man, he will not break his promise, and we hope you will come to a mutual agreement."

But the King did not want to hear this, for he was still afraid of the Tatars, and he stayed in Gueleti. Seeing such devastation, many nobles, with the King's permission, went to the Horde in  
25 order to defend their country and Khut'lusha welcomed gracefully those who came to him. But again they ravaged some of the lands of Kartli, with the exception of Mtiuleti, and returned to the Horde.

When the harvest time came, King David entered Tskhrazmiskhevi and ravaged the estate of Shalva of Kveniplevi for his double-dealing. When Shalva could bear it no more, he implored the *msakhurtukhutsesi* of Surami, the *eristavi* of Kartli – Hamada – to put in a word for him before the  
30 King. He conveyed the request to the King and the King refrained from seizing him. On the contrary, he granted him his estates. Shalva strewed ashes on his head and said: "That is the punishment I deserved for double-dealing against the King." The King pardoned Shalva.

At this time the King's brother, Vakht'ang, appeared; he slackened in love and goodness, and he had been captured by his brother David and imprisoned in the Zhinovani fortress. He escaped  
35 secretly and came to Ivane from Bursa and told him: "I have done no evil to my brother, nor did I offend him. I am not going to the Horde, to his enemies. Send a messenger and inform him that I came to you. If he deigns to see me and convinces me by oath that he is not going to harm me, I will appear before him; and let him give me some subsistence." A man was sent to inform the King of all this. The King rejoiced and taking an oath, took his brother in and obligingly looked after  
40 him. And he thought that they were reconciled, because Vakht'ang married Shabur's daughter. But

Vakht'ang did not want to live without people rendering him the proper honors, so he went to Q'azan and the Horde. The Khan welcomed him graciously and gave him the kingdom. And Khut'lusha, with a powerful army, was ordered to accompany him; and so he came to Tbilisi. There all the Tatars and Georgians joined him, and *sp'asalar* Sargis, the son of the ruler of Samtskhe, Beka, the T'aoians, Torians, Tmogveans and Somkhitars. For Shanshe was the first to join.

5

45. When King David learned that Vakht'ang was to be crowned, he sent (the lord) of Bursa a proposal for a truce, and promised to appear before the Horde, if they would take an oath and give him a hostage. Khut'lusha swore, and satisfied all his demands. And (the lord) of Bursa returned to the King. The King rejoiced and sent to him Queen Oljat and Katholicos Abraham and (the lord) of Bursa, and they came to Mukhrani. Khut'lusha and other *noins* met Oljat in Bazaleti and honored her as if she was a Khan and gave a firm promise, the Khan's seal, and a handkerchief, for this is how they expressed the strength of an oath, and gave as a hostage Khut'lusha's son Sibuch. They did not let Oljat go, but sent the Katholicos, Qadi, and (the lord) of Bursa to meet the King. When they appeared before the King, he noted the absence of Oljat among them, used it as a pretext, and refused to meet the Tatars, for he was quite afraid of them and on his guard against them. He again sent there the same Katholicos, Qadi, and (the lord) of Bursa and asked them to send back Oljat. He promised to meet them after that. When the envoys came to Khut'lusha and he learned that the King was not among them, he said to (the lord) of Bursa: "Where is the deception here? I took a firm oath, and he did not come. So you will receive the punishment for this deception." And in anger he executed (the lord) of Bursa, whose body Shalva sent to his burial vault. Vakht'ang was approved as king and Oljat was sent to the Horde.

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The Tatars went to Mtiuleti and then to Gueleti, for the King had hidden himself there and it caused the Tatars a lot of trouble, while the latter did not diminish in number. When they became aware of the impregnability of Gueleti, they broke camp and retreated, for the winds and snowfalls had begun. The highlanders caught up with them and slew them in great numbers. Many Tatars who entered Zanduk'iskhevi were also slain. They arrived in Kartli and went to Q'azan, taking Oljat with them, whom they had not sent back to the King. Learning of this, the King married the daughter of the *eristavi* of Kartli, Hamada, who was very beautiful.

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Because of these events in Kartli, there was neither sowing nor building of any kind, as in the time of King Ahab, when Elijah abstained from all activity for three years and six months; but here, the devastation continued for five years, for the Lord was very angry with the lust and sins of Sodom which the people indulged in. We fell first into bitter captivity, followed by a period of destruction and extermination by barbarians, then the wheat crop diminished, so that it became impossible to buy it anywhere for any money. And such hunger raged that people ate carrion without shame. Districts and squares, roads and fields, towns and villages were filled with corpses, infants sucked with their lips the petrified breasts of their dead mothers. Most of the people of Kartli went to the lands of Samtskhe, Beka's estates, which was the only place where it was possible to find and buy some bread. Beka's wife Vakhakhi showed great and immeasurable charity, for she possessed all kind of virtues.

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Vakht'ang was permitted to reign. Because the Khan had granted him the kingdom, he took Tbilisi and Somkhiti, Dmanisi and Samshvilde; but he was in conflict with his brother David, for Vakht'ang was stately, firm in his faith, respectful to the church, tranquil and humble, and was not vindictive, but calm and serene.

5        46. At that time the *mtavari* of Samtskhe, Beka, came up still higher. At that time the Turks, who dwelt in Greece, appeared; in the summer they camped in the mountains of P'arkhali, and in winter, by the Pont. Sixty thousand men gathered, and the leader was Azat'-Mose, a brave man. Azat'-Mose set out with all his forces to devastate the whole of Georgia. When he reached Basiani and T'ao, he began to mercilessly plunder, destroy and murder the population. So many people were killed and  
10 taken captive that it is not possible to count them; old people were mercilessly slaughtered, young men, boys, babes in arms murdered on the breasts of their mothers. Nobody had expected such an invasion of Turks, and the villages of T'ao were taken unawares, nobody had time to hide. That was the reason why so many people were killed. T'ao was so ravaged that leaving Vashlovani, the Turks invaded the impassable Murghuli and Nigaliskhevi, where they were beaten off by the sons  
15 of *aznauri* Kherkhemeli. Then the *eristavi* of T'ao, Taq'a Panask'ert'eli, despite his weakness, for his troops were small in number, gave battle to the Turks at the approach of Tortomi fortress, and caused them great harm. But he was unable to drive them from his lands, because of their multiplicity. The Turks grew yet more furious, and devastated T'ao.

      News of these events reached *mtavari* Beka, who took it painfully like anyone with mind and  
20 reason. He summoned all his subjects and set out against the Turks. When he reached T'ao and Basiani, he learned that the Turks had left for their winter quarters. He was late. Grieving because of the destruction of T'ao, he set out for home. T'ao worked oppressively on his soul; he was burning with a desire to repulse the Turks. He summoned all the nobles of Samtskhe, the Shavshet-K'larjis, and said to them: "Now, listen to my word, my brothers and kinsmen, you masters of Georgia. The  
25 most glorious among the bearers of the scepter and purple garments, King David, smashed and overthrew the power of the Turkish tribe, and threw them out of his kingdom. From that time up to now the Turks never reappeared. Now because of our sinfulness, they have risen again and they fiercely ravaged T'ao, took captives and destroyed people without number; they burned down churches, defiled our sacred places; and they again prepare to do all kinds of malicious things to  
30 Christians, to annihilate them. The King is oppressed by the Tatars, and the functionaries and the chiefs of Georgia stand idle, nobody offers any resistance to them. So listen to me, singly and in your tribes; let us gather all our forces and battle against the Turks, and stop them from taking our heads and our children. The Lord will not condemn those who place their trust in Him and profess in Him; He will send us victory over them, as He granted victory to our fathers. Let us fall on the field  
35 of battle in order to keep our faith pure and let us save our brothers. There is no doubt that the Lord will grant us life."

      The *mtavaris* and Beka's soldiers approved the King's words joyfully, and agreed to make war on the Turks, and then broke up. The summertime came, and the Turks started to return; they gathered many soldiers on the way, up to six *bevris*, and all the people of Saracen faith in all the towns joined  
40 them to destroy Christians; there were not only Turks but Persians as well. Learning of the coming

of the Turks, Beka called all his subjects from T'asisk'ari to Basiani: the Meskhis, Shavshis, K'larjis, K'ola-Art'an-K'arniporians, and most of the T'aoians, for all these lands belonged to him, and he called also on the Tmogvians and Torians. He gathered about one *bevri* and two thousand men, and they set out against the Turks. The Turks entered the P'arkhala Mountains, set up a camp there, and sent their horsemen to plunder in Vashlovani. They thought that Beka had gone to the lands of Samtskhe, Kartli and Somkhithi. As the Turks came to Vashlovani – about ten thousand of them – Beka's army barred their way – about five hundred men who were sent as defenders and stood firmly protecting their strongholds. A fierce battle took place, and the Turks fled, and a great number of them were destroyed. The Lord foreordained the victory of Beka over the Turks. 5

Learning of the flight of the Turks from Vashlovani, Beka rejoiced and advanced quickly towards Sp'eri and Baberdi, where the Turks were camped. When the Turks learned of the destruction of their troops by a small army, they were angry and gnashed their teeth. Their leader Azat'-Mose, summoned the Turk soldiers, selected thirty thousand men and set out for Vashlovani to take revenge for the blood of his people. He did not want to encounter Beka. Another thirty thousand he sent to T'ao saying: "I will go and destroy Vashlovani and avenge the blood of my people, but you go to T'ao and raze it to the ground, if there is anything left, and stay in Bana. I will come to Bana after my victory and we will gather and plunder Georgia." He then made his way to Vashlovani. 10 15

The *mandat'urtukhutsesi* and Beka, and all his army took up arms and advanced towards the Turks, for they did not know of their decision to go to Vashlovani. They caught four Turk travelers and brought them to Beka. He questioned them about the Turks' actions and where they were. He separated them and each said the same: "Azat'-Mose with thirty thousand horsemen went to Vashlovani, and the remaining forty thousand he sent to T'ao, and tomorrow or the day after tomorrow they will be there." Beka believed them and divided his army into two parts. The largest part of his select soldiers he entrusted to his firstborn son Sargis, who was brought up as an armor bearer and sent him to Vashlovani against Azat'-Mose. 20 25

Sargis moved fast and overtook the Turks on Vashlovani mountain. As soon as they saw the troops behind them, they turned their horses and moved against Sargis. Seeing the smallness of his troops, for there were only five hundred Meskhis and the Turks were thirty thousand, they (the Turks) rejoiced and decided to destroy them all. The horsemen rushed fearlessly, Sargis moved in front and his people bravely met the enemy. A fierce battle took place, and in the very beginning of the fight the Turks wavered and fled, and so many of them were killed that the pursuers, checking the Turks who fell on the battlefield, counted five hundred and thirteen dead, and this without taking into account those who were destroyed in pursuit. They pursued them until the sunset. The Lord looked mercifully on the cross-bearers. And what must be noted particularly, is that in such a battle, not more than five men of Beka's were killed, and not one noble among them. So the Lord granted them power and a victory. Sargis, though a young man, fought bravely, for from his family he inherited the valor and courage, which distinguished his forefathers. 30 35

Beka moved on towards the Turks' households, and the Turks seeing Beka and his troops advancing toward them stepped aside at once and fled. They fled into the mountains, and had nothing on them that was worth anything, for they abandoned everything. Beka and his people 40

pursued them, catching and killing them without number. A few of the Turks had found refuge in towns and fortresses of the Persians, and some hid in Norkalaki. Beka's people barred the narrow roads, and for many Turks, there remained no way for flight. The Turks were corralled there, and like sheep they were caught and killed by Beka's people. The following also happened: the Turks who  
5 were put to flight by his son Sargis, encountered the rear of *mandat'urtukhutsesi* Beka's troops. Here they were met by the Meskhis, who slew them and surrounded the town of Sp'eri. They captured the town at the first assault, except for the fortress, and filled their coffers with goods, gold, silver, cloths, flocks, herds, camels, cattle and sheep, the number of which were too many to count. They themselves loaded the donkeys and took all the spoils, though with difficulty. The victory the Lord  
10 granted Beka was without the sacrifice of a single man.

Beka besieged Sp'eri and two hundred fleeing Turks retreated to Pont. After his victory, Sargis went to his father; on his way he destroyed Norkalaki and gave his people booty and captives. He appeared victorious before his father. When it became impossible for the Sp'erians to stand Beka's siege any more, they sent him an envoy: "We belong to Khan Q'azan, and the Turks left for the  
15 Pont; we implore you to have grace and give up the siege, and we will give you a lot of gold, silver, mules and horses." Listening to this, Beka took from Sp'eri and Baberdi immeasurable riches and returned victorious. The *mtavaris* from K'arnukalaki came out to meet him, they also gave him gifts and presents and he did them no harm. After such a brilliant victory granted to him by the Lord, he came back with immense riches. For Beka was the builder of monasteries and churches. He was  
20 respectful to monks, elders and deans, and morning, afternoon and evening services were never missed in his churches. That was the reason why the Lord assisted him, and Khan Q'azan gave him K'ari with all the adjacent lands.

47. We will return now to our initial narrative. Khan Q'azan began to set up for a campaign against the Egyptians and he called on King Vakht'ang; Beka also sent him his chosen troops, as  
25 he was in his service. Q'azan set out and entered the country of Asurast'an and Shamis and started ravaging it, for he had an army of one hundred and thirty thousand men. The Sultan of Misr, who was called Nasir Melik, had gathered all his troops and was prepared to engage the enemy. The war broke out, so fierce that *noin* Khut'lusha with a thousand horsemen came out and stood in the front line of Q'azan's troops to fight against the enemy who had a numerical superiority; six hundred out  
30 of one thousand were killed and about four hundred remained, and with these (men) he overcame and put to flight his enemy. Chopan Suldus came to his help with five hundred men, among whom were Vakht'ang and his people. A huge amount of people died on both sides and the Egyptians and Sultan Nasir Melik fled. Q'azan returned from the pursuit and rested for three days, and on the fourth day started the pursuit again and caught up with them, and slew them. The Tatars dispersed  
35 all over the country and took captives, but the army drove them (the Egyptians) down to the Holy City of Jerusalem, a place of death for many Christians, but still more so for Persians. Q'azan attacked Diamushq', which is Damask. And the worshippers of the Almighty yielded them the city and immeasurable goods; Q'azan reinforced Damask and adjoining towns, and spent four months there. He left a garrison there to defend the towns and went home to Tavrezh.

When the summer came, the Damaskians drove away the garrison left by Q'azan. Learning of this, Q'azan summoned his *sp'asp'et'* Khut'lusha, King Vakht'ang and all the *mtavaris* of Georgia and sent them on a campaign against the Sultan. They entered Sham and Damask, and ravaged Damask, but could not capture it. They crossed Great Antioch and reached Gaza. But the Sultan did not dare to fight them, and they plundered the country for six months. Then they turned back and appeared victoriously before Q'azan. 5

Because King David did not trust the Tatars, he spent summers in Mtiuleti, and winters in Kartli,<sup>57</sup> which was the reason why the country of Kartli was declining. *Mtavari* Baq'atar gained power; he plundered Kartli and Trialeti, and drove away the *aznauris* from their estates. The population of Kartli suffered many troubles. King David gathered all the Mtiulis, and came to Tbilisi with an army of about fifteen thousand horsemen and foot soldiers and joined battle with the Q'ivchaq's who were travelling to their summer quarters. Part of the Q'ivchaq' contingent retreated into town and part fled along the banks of the Mt'k'vari. 10

Learning of this, Vakht'ang, who was residing at T'abakhmela, advanced with a few men, crossed the bridge and then Sakhiudabeli, and came to Makhata. David was with his army in Makhata, on the top of the ridge. And Vakht'ang approached from the foot of the mountain but stopped, not giving battle because of the superiority of David's army. Then a small group of soldiers descended. Vakht'ang's people who were waiting there, attacked them and put them to flight, and killed two brothers and their children. When the fight flared up a group of one thousand fugitive Q'ivchaq's joined Vakht'ang. Then the wrath of God overcame David; he fled and his immense army remained unengaged in battle. David left the battlefield without a fight and the Q'ivchaq's and Georgians following in his wake persuaded him to come down to Jach'vi. But Vakht'ang was not David's enemy, and he fought David only out of fear of the Tatars. 15 20

Learning of David's flight, Baq'atar began to plunder Kartli even more mercilessly, and King David could offer no resistance to him. Meanwhile David caught a severe disease – gout of the hands and legs, which disabled him. He was faithless and had no fear of God, so, falling ill, he lost all his strength. Baq'atar continued to plunder the country, destroying the population, though Hamad of Surami and Rat'i staunchly resisted him. Baq'atar won from Garmek'eli, K'akha's son, and the fortress of Dzami.<sup>58</sup> Learning of this, Beka set out with a large army against Baq'atar. But Baq'atar lined his people up in the fortress in front of Beka's leading troops. A fierce battle took place and in the very first engagement Baq'atar fled and hid in the fortress. Beka followed him and persistently besieged the fortress. When the siege became very hard, the Ovses, by the grace of God, begged for mercy, promising to do no harm. And Baq'atar came out, suffering no disgrace before Beka, and then he died. 25 30

48. Now we will talk more about the Tatars. Because the Egyptians drove away the guards from Damask, Q'azan was angered, and he sent the very same Khut'lusha with a powerful army and Vakht'ang with Georgian troops. Learning of their coming, the Sultan gave them battle. A powerful fight occurred, and many died on both sides. But that day did not show a winner, and the night separated them. And when the Tatars retreated, they saw a high range; Khut'lusha and his people ascended it, as well as Usein and Sevinji. Only Sibuch, son of Khut'lusha remained in the plain 35 40

close to the Sultan. And Beka's people were close by him, and all of them kept their horses ready. But the Sultan resorted to cunning, for he flooded the Tatars camp, and such a bog formed there that night, that the horses and the people disappeared in confusion in the slime. At daybreak, the Tatars found a slimy bog behind them and soldiers before them, and they scattered. They found in  
5 that slimy bog a narrow spot, and there many people and horses were slain. When this spot filled up with people and horses, fleeing soldiers trampled upon them. Numberless Georgians and Tatars died there, Vakht'ang and the *noins* survived and appeared before the Khan, who, however became angry, and put all the *noins* in prison. He then began again to arm himself against the Sultan, though falling ill with some stomach illness he passed away. And there was wailing, for the people admired  
10 his uprightness; there were no evil deeds or robbers, or iniquitous people in his time, and for that reason his death caused the people much grief.

After him, his brother, by the name of Kharbanda, was made Khan; he was called afterwards Sultan Oljat and he was one-eyed. And as far as he was able, he held to his brother Q'azan's mode of ruling, for he too was a kind man. He settled things over his realm and did many good things for  
15 Vakht'ang.

Kharbanda wanted to go to Gilan and summoned the Tatar army along with Vakht'ang and divided all his people into four parts: the best and the most deserving part of his army he left for himself as well as King Vakht'ang. One part he gave to Khutlusha and Beka. One part of the army to Jalair, as well as the Ossetians of Gori. One part he gave to Suldus Chopan. And each of them he  
20 sent upon a specified route; he himself set forth toward Gilan – and he assigned King Vakht'ang in advance. But the Gilanians though few in number did not waver, for there were four commanders in Gilan, who were called Erkabazn, Ubash, Rost'an and Asan. This last one stayed in the stronghold and conducted firm defence; and Erkabazn appeared before Khan Kharbanda and gave battle, and a powerful struggle took place, for Vakht'ang himself led the troops. Because of the narrowness of  
25 the roads and the thickness of the forests, foot soldiers could not move, and on the plains there were slimy bogs.

The battle flamed up; the Tatars and Georgians fought at first with arrows, then swords, and Kharbanda observed everything in person. Some came to their help and encouraged with their voices. The battle became fierce. King Vakht'ang and his people did not turn their back on the  
30 enemy, and because of the narrowness of the roads many were killed; of every ten men hardly two survived. The Somkhitars were also with him and all of them horsemen. It was a slaughter, and many *aznauris* remained without heirs, for the fathers, sons and brothers, all of them were there. But some of them survived. Vakht'ang did not leave the battlefield, but fought mightily and fearlessly. He was wounded lightly in his hip. As the sun began setting and the night approached, the armies  
35 broke up.

Having seen the power of the forests and mountains, the Khan withdrew in the night. Learning of this, the Gilanians pursued them and overtaking him inflicted much damage. But then the son of Khut'lusha came to challenge the Gilanians. The chief of the Gilanians, Ubash, ordered to put wattle fences, hung up a gate and bar the narrow passages, offering strong resistance to Khut'lusha. But he  
40 dismounted, sat on a chair and ordered Beka's troops to dismount and get under the wattle fences,

which they did. They went under the wattles and passed through. A fierce battle took place with the participation of the Georgians and Meskhis. They did not turn their backs, and fought bravely, and most of the Gilanians were destroyed. Then somebody let loose an arrow and struck *noin* Khut'lusha on his uncovered head and he fell dead from his chair. Seeing the death of his father, his son, Sibuch fled at once, and his troops as well, but the Meskhis remained behind the wattle fences. Only a few escaped, most of them died. And the Lord's wrath descended upon the Tatars and Meskhis, for there where an acacia-tree stood in the plain water had accumulated in the night. And the ground had turned into such a slimy bog that it was impossible for horses or people to cross it, and great destruction took place. 5

Rost'an Melik met Chopan in fight on the plain, but Chopan overpowered him and he hurriedly retreated to the fortress. Chopan did not follow him, but quietly turned back taking with him his horsemen. Gamrek'eli, the son of Javakh, fought bravely in that war and returned peacefully. 10

Asan also fought Usen and the Ovses but not one prevailed in this battle, and they too fled and gathered in Uzhan before Khan Kharbanda. Suldus Chopan was assigned the chief commander in place of Khut'lusha, and King Vakht'ang was rendered honors and all his nobles with him, for their military feats, and sent home with lavish gifts. 15

49. When Vakht'ang left, some people from Khodras – Saracens by faith and enemies of Christianity – came to Khan Kharbanda, and said to him: "If you do not force all the Christians to renounce their faith and destroy the churches, you will be unable to conquer your enemies, your kingdom will not prosper or your government succeed." These believers in evil urged this abomination upon the Khan. The Khan yielded to this pressure and began to destroy churches. He sent his army and one of the main *noins* to conquer Georgia in order to force the King and all Georgians to renounce their faith and turn into Saracens. They destroyed churches all over Georgia. The commissioned *noin* caught up with Vakht'ang who was on his way to Nakhchevan. But King Vakht'ang was not scared; on the contrary, he was inspired, along with his soldiers, to perform courageous feats in the name of our Lord Christ. He said to them: "People, brothers and fellow believers, true advocates of Christ! Remember the faith of your fathers, hear the voice of the Apostles, remember the deeds and courage of the martyrs and see with your eyes their innumerable miracles in the churches and hear the true tidings from His fair lips: "Who accepts Me before the people, him I will accept before My Divine Father," and again: "Come to Me all the suffering and burdened, and I will give you repose." Now let us go without hesitation to the Khan and let us give our lives for the One, who sacrificed his life for us. We are going willingly, and let the Will of God be as it is, and He will protect His flock." 20 25 30

Vakht'ang's soldiers joyously received his order, set out hastily for the Horde and appeared before the Khan. The Khan was surprised at the arrival of the King. They came to the Khan's court and fell on their knees; and the King said in a loud voice: "Listen, oh, high and powerful Khan. There is an order for all the Christians to reject our faith. So listen: your happy grandfathers and fathers were obeyed and served by our grandfathers and fathers with this faith, and they were never told that the Georgian faith was wrong, and we were your most distinguished servants. The Persian faith was considered to be the most foul by the first Khans. That was the reason why they were 35 40

so ruthlessly destroyed, for they were poisonous sodomites and murderers. And if you listen to the words of the Persians, Oh, Khan, I, King of Georgia, and all the Georgian *mtavaris* now standing before you, are ready to die for the Christian faith, and all the Christians who stand before you are ready to do the same. So, cut off our heads now". And he bowed his head. Hearing these words, the

5 Khan was astonished; and he showed respect to the King, made him stand up, bowed before him and blamed those who tried to persuade him.

But the following also happened: the churches in Tavrezh were destroyed and in four days, the four sons of Kharbanda were killed. By his audience, the King saved Georgia from impending evil and destruction.

10 Vakht'ang returned honored, and arrived at Nakhchevan. But he caught some stomach disease and passed away, adorned by the royal crown. They took him over and buried in Dmanisi. He left two sons: Dimit'ri and Giorgi. Dimit'ri possessed Dmanisi, and Giorgi – Samshvilde.

Command was transferred from Khut'lusha to Chopan; Chopan set out with an innumerable army. At first he entered K'ola-Art'ani and then Arsiani; he ordered Beka to meet with the Khan, but

15 Beka did not do this himself, but sent his younger son, by name Shalva. The Khan departed and crossed Somkhiti leaving Beka's estates in peace.

50. The King's son Giorgi, who was brought up by his grandfather, the great Beka, whom Beka sent to accompany Chopan, began to shine, and was presented to the Khan. And the Khan kindly honored him and assigned him a royal rank in advance. The Khan then sent an envoy and asked

20 David to send him his son, so as to make him King. Giorgi was young; he was sent to the Horde, and the Khan gave him his kingdom and Tbilisi, and he appointed the great Giorgi as his tutor and manager of affairs. Then they came to Tbilisi.

That same year, the *mtavari* of Samtskhe, Beka, passed away, a man who had been successful in everything, diligent in divine as well as in human affairs, a law-giver, a builder of churches and

25 monasteries, honorable in the secular world, and immensely generous to the wretched. His loving spouse was so generous to bishops and monks, that as soon as she got to know of some devoted hard working bishop, she summoned him and kept him close, presenting gifts and honors. Her house was full of monks and elders. And at the same time she heeded orphans and widows, and prayers were said three times a day in her house. And that is why the Lord helped her in overcoming

30 her adversaries in all the days of her life. She passed away in peace and tranquility at sixty six years of age leaving the population of Samtskhe in mourning and in infinite grief. Her three sons took possession of Samtskhe: the elder was Sargis, then Q'uarq'ware, and the youngest was Shalva.

In the third year, King David died, burdened by a bitter illness, and he was buried at the royal burial place in Mtskheta; he was replaced by his little son Giorgi, a King at the age of two.

35 The Khan, meanwhile, decided to arm himself against the country of Sham, the fortress that is called Rabasham, which was owned by the Sultan of Misr. He set out with his forces and took a great army with him, and laid siege to Rabasham for five months, but unable to inflict any harm to it, he departed. He had with him six eagles, trained with other birds and leopards, so great was his power. The Khan returned home, and never more in the course of his days did he lead any

40 campaign, living in peace, unconcerned, keeping his Khandom for a further thirteen years.

Sultan Oljat set up little Giorgi as King, and Melik Zaal, a Persian from Khorasan and Akhruch, Chopan's uncle, was instructed to bring the whole of Georgia together under the reign of Giorgi. They assigned to him Shanshe Mkhargrdzeli and Zachariah, born of Khuashak, Avag's daughter. They arrived in Javakheti, then in K'okht'astavi, and they invited Sargis and Q'uarq'uaire to visit them, but they decided not to come.

A revolt occurred in Greece, Parvan's children and the great city of K'oni broke away from Oljat. The Khan sent Chopan to Greece at the head of his army, giving him the Georgians to accompany him. Giorgi set out with Chopan, but young Giorgi, Melik Zaal, Shanshe and Zachariah did not go with him; they came to Tbilisi instead. Then King Giorgi went to Greece; the Parvanians could not put up resistance for more than a year. The Khan gave all the Georgians who were there to King Giorgi. The Javakhians and Torelians joined him; and wherever or whoever they fought, every time the King and the Georgians demonstrated their courage. He subdued all the renegades and those who revolted, and one year later he came back. At the time of harvest, when Chopan appeared before the Khan and stayed with him about a month – Sultan Oljat died and left behind him a little son, a seven-year old boy by the name of Abusaid. They buried the Sultan in a town called Q'orghoilang, which he had founded and developed more than Tavrezh, and had given it the name Sultania.

King Giorgi learned of the death of the Khan and of his replacement by Abusaid, and he went to the Horde. They welcomed him there, and Chopan rejoiced and treated him like his son, and granted him the whole of Georgia, all the *mtavaris* of Georgia, and the children of King David, and the Meskhis, Beka's children.

Luminaries began to shine; and my speaking power fails me in my task to recount these wonderful and terrible things.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Somkhiti was the name given by ancient Georgian authors to the southern regions of Georgia – Lower (Kvemo) Kartli, and also to Armenia. This is similar to the name “Abkhazeti,” which meant Abkhazia in its narrow sense (Abkh. Apsni), and the entire Western part of Georgia as well, or even Georgia as a whole. The population of Somkhiti was often denoted by the double ethnonym: Somkhitar-Kartlians (compare: L.M. Melikset-Bek, “Armiane v Gruzii,” (“Armenians in Georgia”), in Kavkaz I Vizantia, Vol. 9, 1979, no. 1, pp. 175-176),
- <sup>2</sup> A distorted spelling of some anthroponym.
- <sup>3</sup> The invasion of Azerbaijan by Mongol troops pursuing Khoresms Shah Jalal-ad-Din (1220-1231).
- <sup>4</sup> Gandza was established in the middle of the ninth century, and was the second (after Bardava) capital of ancient Caucasian Albania. Gandza's close military and economic relations with Georgia and Armenia contributed to its growth. Gandza was an important point connecting Georgia with Eastern Transcaucasia, which is supported by the existence of the “Gandza Gate” in medieval Tbilisi.
- <sup>5</sup> There is a confused identification of the name Berduji river with the rivers of Debed, Dzegam-Chai (Sagim), and Akstafa.
- <sup>6</sup> The first armed conflict of Georgians with Mongols was in 1222. Giorgi Lasha was the son of Queen Tamar.
- <sup>7</sup> The south-eastern region of historical Georgia.
- <sup>8</sup> The Georgian name of Derbent Pass, one of the most important strategic arteries connecting south Caucasia with north-eastern Caucasia.

- <sup>9</sup> There are variations of the Arabian and Persian forms of this name in ancient Georgian sources, corresponding to Sharvan and Shirvan. See V. F. Minorski, *Istoria Shirvana i Derbenta (The History of Shirvan and Derbent)*, Moscow: 1963, p. 34) who writes that the Persian form – Shirvan – was established only in the sixteenth century.
- <sup>10</sup> On Q'ipchaks in the North Caucasus see: Z. V. Anchabadze, "Kipchaki Severnogo Kavkaza po dannim gruzinskikh letopisei" ("The Q'ipchaks of North Caucasus According to Georgian Manuscripts") in *O proiskhozhdenii balkar i karachaevtsev (On the Origin of Balkars and Karachais)*, Nalchik: 1960, pp. 115, 120-121. In Georgia to the end of the thirteenth century, there existed the government position "me-sa-q'ivchaq'e" (literally "tax collector for the Q'ipchaks"). The duty of the person occupying it was to collect a special tax for keeping the Kipchak mercenary army.
- <sup>11</sup> These are the ancient Georgian names for the populations that lived to the west and east of Surami ridge (the ancient Georgian "Likhi"). There is some information suggesting that Imiers (literally "living on the other side") was the name for the peoples of North Caucasus too.
- <sup>12</sup> A fortress town in the north-west of Caucasus.
- <sup>13</sup> The sister and successor of Giorgi IV, who ruled from 1223-1245.
- <sup>14</sup> The distinguished Georgian commanders at the time of the wars with the Khorezmians.
- <sup>15</sup> Defeat of the Georgians by Jalal-ad-Din's army at the town of Garni (1225). The incident where Shalva is recognized by the "Nakhchevanians and Adarbadaganians," which is emphasized by the chronicler, indicates the existence of direct contacts between the public figures of southern Georgia (adjoining Armenia) and Azerbaijan.
- <sup>16</sup> In this case Abkhazia means the entire western part of Georgia including Abkhazia proper.
- <sup>17</sup> The retreat of Jalal-ad-Din from Tbilisi, which he devastated, to Adarbadagan, where the Khoresmshah quickly started his preparations for battling the Mongols, is evidence of his insecure position in Tbilisi.
- <sup>18</sup> The ancestors of the Vainakh group of peoples (Chechens, Ingush, Batsbians). They are also mentioned in the early parts of *kartlis tskhovreba* and in the Armenian language *Geography* of the eighth century. In later Georgian sources, this people are known under the name of "kisti;" the old term "durdzüks" now designates only Ingush.
- <sup>19</sup> Towns in medieval Armenia.
- <sup>20</sup> Compare: the information of Sebastatsi on the peace between the Kipchaks who appeared in Tabriz after the first Mongolian invasion, and the Tabrizians (A. G. Galstian. *Armianskie istochniki o mongolakh (Armenian Sources on Mongols)*, Moscow: 1962, p. 23, and note 13.
- <sup>21</sup> Tavrezh (Tavriz) was seized by the Mongols about 1232, and their invasion of Georgia is dated as 1233. Mughan was a springboard for the Mongols invasions into Caucasus.
- <sup>22</sup> A town and a district in Shirvan.
- <sup>23</sup> An ancient Georgian name of the western outlying districts of Caucasian Albania. With the fall of these regions (about 1235) the Mongolian conquest of Caucasian Albania was concluded.
- <sup>24</sup> A position at the court in feudal Georgia ("court minister").
- <sup>25</sup> A town in historical Armenia. In the fight against the invading Mongols, feudal sovereigns could not create sufficiently monolithic armies. That is why they used individual forms of resistance – such as the defense of towns, fortresses, castles etc.
- <sup>26</sup> Contemporary Kutaisi.
- <sup>27</sup> Under the term "Caucasus," the Georgian Chronicles implied the North Caucasus too with the exception of Daghestan. Daghestan was given different names depending on the names of its different regions (Didoeti, Lek'eti etc.). North Caucasus and the northern regions of Kartli – Mtiuleti, where parts of the population were related ethnically to Vainakhs as well as to Georgian mountain dwellers, often served as a secure place of shelter for the population of different regions of Caucasus.
- <sup>28</sup> One of the regions of historical Armenia.
- <sup>29</sup> The Mongols raided Georgia and Armenia in the spring and summer, and with the approach of winter, retreated to the territory of Azerbaijan.
- <sup>30</sup> Gias-ad-Din Kaikhosro II, the ruler of the Sultanate of Rumi in 1236-1245, and the husband of Rusudan's daughter Tamar.
- <sup>31</sup> A category of the medieval Georgian feudal system.

- <sup>32</sup> This is the only information we have about the Abkhazian *eristavi* Sharvashidze Dardin and his relations with the Sultan of Rumi. The Abkhazian feudal family Sharvashidze, which played an outstanding role in the cultural and political life of Georgia during the Middle Ages and modern times (S. N. Janashia, "Giorgi Sharvashidze," in G. Sharvashidze: *Shromebi (Works)*, Tbilisi: 1946 . He is mentioned for the first time in *History and Eulogies of Monarchs*. It is thought, not without foundation, that the Sharvashidze family originated from the Shirvan-Shah clan (D. I. Gulia, *Istoriia Abkhazii (The History of Abkhazia)*, Tiflis: 1925, Vol. 1, p. 138; Z. V. Anchabadze, *Iz istorii srednevekovoi Abkhazii (From the History of Medieval Abkhazia)*, Sukhumi: 1959, p. 192, His domains were annexed to Georgia at the time of David the Restorer (1089-1125).
- <sup>33</sup> The departure of Rusudan's son to Bato took place about 1243. In August-September of 1246 in Han Guiuk's headquarters, he and the Russian prince Jaroslav Vsevolodovich were visited by Plano Karpini (*Puteshestvia v vostochnie strani Plano Karpini i Rubruka (Journey to the Eastern Countries of Plano Karlini and Rubruka)*), Moscow: 1957, p. 34).
- <sup>34</sup> Immediately after the death of Rusudan (1245) the Mongols turned Georgia into a regency, dividing it into eight *dumans*.
- <sup>35</sup> The participants prepared an anti-Mongol rebellion. The conspiracy was organized about 1245 in K'okht'astavi (historical Meskheti, to the south-east of Akhaltsikhe). Representatives of eastern and western Georgia ("Abkhazeti" in the original sources) participated in the revolt. The Mongols pardoned those responsible in the end, indicating some political discretion and pragmatism regarding distant provinces.
- <sup>36</sup> The Georgian form of the name of Ilkhan Khulagu (1256-1265).
- <sup>37</sup> On his way back Khulagu stopped in Azerbaijan, where he replenished his army.
- <sup>38</sup> A place in Armenia.
- <sup>39</sup> After the defeat of the Ismaelites (1256) Khulagu assumed the title of Ilkhan. In the vast empire of Khulagu, the Christian peoples of Caucasia played an important role, which indicates his patronage, even to the detriment of the Muslims.
- <sup>40</sup> Rashid-ad-Din, *Sobranie letopisei (Collection of Chronicles)*, Moscow: 1960, Vol. II, pp. 118, 120) informs us that among the first measures of Khan Guiuk at his election in 1259, where "both Davuds from Gurjistan were present," was the decision of the Khan to subject "the Queen's son Davud to another Davud".
- <sup>41</sup> Jigda-Khatun, the first spouse of Ulu David, was Mongol by birth. The marriage was contracted for political reasons by Ulu David. In the absence of her husband, Jigda-Khatun with the help of Jikur acted as ruler of Georgia. But in 1259, Ulu David's son Giorgi, borne of Altun, put his signature after his father's, which indicates some diminution of her role in state affairs. At the same time Jikur was displaced from his active position. The reasons for his removal are not known from any primary sources, but they were perhaps due to the weakening control of the Mongols. In this connection, as the chronicler writes, acceptance by Jigda-Khatun of the adultery of her spouse with Alanian Altun, who was probably a representative of some influential class of Ossetian society which had never submitted to the Mongol authorities, was not accidental. The Turk name of this Alanian woman is noteworthy and indicates the level of influence of Turkish linguistic elements in Northern Caucasia at that time.
- <sup>42</sup> After the division of Georgia into "two *mtavardoms*" (similar to princedoms) "the country settled down." That was not the purpose of the Mongols who kept the Georgians under constant control. A man by the name of Jikur (his dates of birth and death are unknown) had risen from the ranks at the court of the ruler of eastern Georgia. Being a civil administrator at the court of Ulu David (in the position of guest protocol manager (Georgian: "mest'umre"), whose duty was to ensure the observance of protocol connected with the reception of ambassadors and "guests"), Jikur, because of his distinguished personal qualities, secured great influence over the King. The latter, during the period of Mongol dominance, gave Jikur virtually unlimited power in Georgia. The chronicler says nothing of his ethnic origin, but his name "Jikur" (which means "Jikian") suggests Jikian origin. Obviously he was one of the many representatives of the peoples of North Caucasia, whose names we meet on the pages of the Georgian chronicles among distinguished state figures and feudal lords serving in Georgia.
- <sup>43</sup> According to Armenian historians (Gandzaketsi, Sebastatsi and others) the Mongols carried out the census of the subject population and created an inventory of their properties in 1254. The reason was the economic difficulties of the conquerors.

- <sup>44</sup> This refers to the war of the Mongols against Egypt and Georgians' participation in it.
- <sup>45</sup> I. A. Javakhishvili, making reference to the Ani inscription of Abusaid, writes that at the time, as noted by the chronicler, there existed a double notion of the "precincts of Georgia"- the ethnic boundaries and the state boundaries (the sphere of influence including dependencies). In order to compare them it is possible to refer to the Armenian historian Stepanos Orbelian about the transfer by the Mongols to Dimit'ri II "of the country of Armenia in its entirety, Avag's house, Shahanshah's house, and the sons of Gageli and *atabek* Sadun." S. Orbeliani, *tskhovreba orbelianta (History of the Orbelians)* (E.Tsagareishvili, ed.), Tbilisi: 1978, p. 426). The chronicler reflected the pre-Mongolian annals tradition, which began at this time to conflict with the real state of affairs. At the end of the thirteenth century, the eastern borders of Georgia followed the Arsu river. The power of Georgian rulers, who were dependent on the Mongols, was also nominal in Nik'opsia. Dimit'ri's power did not extend over Western Georgia at all. Regarding Derbent, we should ask: is the name in this context used in the broad sense so often employed by Georgian chroniclers? There was a historical tradition according to which the territory of Derbent extended far to the west (V. V. Bartold, *Sochinenia (Works)*, Moscow: 1965, Vol. III, 424).
- <sup>46</sup> The Mongols decided not to execute the conspirators. The concern of the nobles of Khulagu for protection from North Caucasia is quite understandable: in the struggle between the Juchids and Khulaguids for possession of Caucasia, an important role was assigned to Derbent and North Caucasia. Eastern Georgia, a vassal to the Khulaguids, was systematically manipulated by the Juchids, and that could have had undesirable consequences for the Ilkhans. There were trade relations between the Golden Horde and Georgia; communications were carried out through the Derbent pass and Darial road.
- <sup>47</sup> The success of the Khulaguids in their long struggle against the Golden Horde was due in part to the contribution made by Christian peoples in Caucasia, particularly Georgians, Armenians and Alans. An important field of military operations was K'akheti and the regions of the ancient Caucasian Albania – Hereti and K'ambechiani. On this territory, which long before the described events was made part of the kingdom of Kartli, was dominated by contingents of the armies of Georgian rulers, the Ilkhans' allies. Due to these wars the Mongols had again to carry out a census and inventory of the properties of the local population. Berka in the *Hundred Years Chronicle* is called Batu's son, though in fact he was a brother. In the account of an Egyptian author of the thirteenth century on the beginning of the military conflict between Berka and Khulagu, there appears a diplomatic messenger of the Sultan of Egypt, a person "from Alan merchants" (cited by V. G. Tizengauzen, *Materiali otnoshashchiesia do istorii Zolotoi Ordi (Materials Related to the History of Golden Horde)*, Moscow: 1886, Vol. I, pp. 55-56. He was probably not a Caucasian Alan. In the above mentioned Egyptian source it is said that on their way to Berka, the Sultan's envoys visited "a place called Crimea, which is populated by peoples of various nations, notably, Q'ipchaks, Russians and Alans" (*Ibid.*, p. 63). According to information of Kirakos Gandzaketsi, the Caucasian Alans supported Khulagu. During the war against Berka, one of the mercenary regiments "gathered at the Alanian gate."
- <sup>48</sup> According to Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Khulagu's successor, Abagha (1265-1282) "gathering a large army set out to make war against Berka, who departing through the Derbent gate set up his camp on the bank of the Mt'k'vari." Georgian and Armenian historians give a number of important topographic details.
- <sup>49</sup> Upon the death of Ulu David (1272), his juvenile son Dimit'ri Tavdadebuli (self-sacrificing) ascended the throne. In the political life of Georgia in this period, people of other nations played a more active role. If in the past they were "Georgianized" so that chroniclers thought it natural to count them among the "Georgian tribe," now, because of the cultural and political weakening of the Georgians, there appear to be tendencies of "denationalization" among these tribes. This is illustrated by the example of Sadun Mank'aberdeli (of Mank'abardi), one of the powerful vassals in Georgia and Armenia during the period of Mongol dominion, and a Kurd by birth. The sources indicate his skill of easy adaptation to the milieu of Georgian, Armenian and Mongol nobles. He was distinguished by his particular devotion to the Mongol authorities, as a result of which he obtained high military rank in Georgia and gained a number of large estates in Armenia. He was known as a skillful blackmailer, who kept the local nobles in a state of permanent fear of the Mongols.
- <sup>50</sup> The representatives of the highest clergy of Georgia did not fail to take advantage of the benefits that the Mongols granted for some time to the Christians. Poemen, the bishop of Gareji, reestablished Christianity

among the Daghestanis, who populated the territory adjacent to Georgia and who were neglected in the period of the Mongol conquest.

<sup>51</sup> At the end of the thirteenth century, the population of Derbent rebelled against the Mongols. Dimit'ri II, who participated in all the military actions of the Mongols, took part in the suppression of the "revolt," probably without any hope of personal advantage. It was no accident that the Georgians had established their missionary activity in the neighboring regions of Daghestan, which met with no objections on the part of the Mongols.

<sup>52</sup> I. A. Javakhishvili supposedly corrects: Anu (?); the location of the fortress is not identified.

<sup>53</sup> Suspected of participation in the plot of the Mongolian nobles against Khan Abagha, Dimit'ri II was summoned by him to his headquarters (1289). In this connection the Georgian nobles called a council at which it was proposed the King flee to the "strongholds of Mtiuleti or Abkhazia." What is meant in the first case is the mountainous areas of the southern ridges of the Greater Caucasian range, populated by the ancestors of the contemporary Batsbians, Tushs and Khevsurs; and in the second, case, the regions of North Abkhazia or Svaneti, which were regions difficult to access.

<sup>54</sup> After the death of Dimit'ri II in the Ilkhans' camp, a struggle occurred around the question of succession to the throne in eastern Georgia. In connection with this event the chronicler mentions the "Ovsetian King" Farejan, one of the participants in the council which took place at the Khan's court, who was an active supporter of David and opponent of Vakht'ang (David Narin's son), the candidate supported by most of the Georgian feudal lords. After the death of Khan Argun (1291), this struggle became fierce, and David's adherents, among whom was the Ossetian group headed by Parejan, played an important role, and gained the upper hand.

<sup>55</sup> I. A. Javakhishvili believed that the activation of the Ossetian expansion in Kartli at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, was stimulated by David's frequent trips to the Khan's headquarters as well as by the weakening of Georgia as a result of the heavy wars it was waging.

<sup>56</sup> With the coming to power of Ilkhan Mohammad Gazan (Georg. Q'azan-Khan) in 1295 (K. E. Bosworth, *Musulmanskie dinastii (Muslim Dynasties)*, Moscow: 1971, p. 200), Islam finally triumphed in the state of the Ilkhans, and active persecution of Christians began. That brought about a split between the Ilkhans and their recent ally and supporter David VIII. The latter acted confidently and presumptuously against Gazan-Khan. He rejected the decision of his own council to appear in the Ilkhans' headquarters on Gazan's demand; many tribes and peoples in Caucasia were on his side. The center of this mutiny was Mtiuleti, a region located on the southern ridges of the Greater Caucasian range. This region was not part of ethnographic Kartli, and was populated by tribes related to the Vainakhs, who experienced a great cultural influence from Kartli, and formed a political union with the kingdom. Being a natural ally of the Kartlians, David could freely use the strategic roads that went over their territory and connected North Caucasia with southern Caucasia.

<sup>57</sup> At first, the position of David VIII was quite firm; he spent winter in the valleys of Kartli without fear. Waiting in vain for the khans from the Golden Horde, who were in confrontation with Gazan, David began to act on his own, relying mainly on the army made up of the Mtiulis and local Kartlian feudal lords, whom he had won over. His main goal was to win back Tbilisi from Vakht'ang II (the latter ascended the throne in 1304). The Ovses under their ruler Bakatar (Baq'atar), Parejan's successor, were on Vakht'ang's side. According to the chronicler's words, the Ovses represented the most active force among those who fought against David VIII. Bakatar died in 1304. After his death the Ovses are mentioned only once as part of the Mongol army during Mohammed Khudaband's campaign against Gilian in 1307.

<sup>58</sup> Fortress Dzami was located in the ravine with the same name in Inner (Shida) Kartli.

## GLOSSARY

*agariani* – (Arabic: *Hājar*). Hagar was the second wife of Abraham and the mother of his first son, Ishmael.

Hagarene is a term that widely used for the early Arab conquerors.

*amira* – ruler, commander, prince.

*amirejibi* – the grand chamberlain.

*amirsp'asalar* ( *amir* – head, governor, and *sp'asalar* – commander) – a commander-in chief.

*ant'ip'atosi-p'at'rik'i* – Georgian „ანტიპატოსი-პატრიკი“ – proconsul, high-ranking official in Byzantium.

*atabagi*, a father or tutor of kings or sultans, adviser to the kings.

*aznauri* – a stratum of the dominant noble class in feudal Georgia(5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> cc).

Bagrat'ionis – the royal dynasty of the Bagrat'ionis in Georgia.

*ber* – the elder.

*bevri* – ten thousand.

*bumberazi* – a champion. The words “bumberazi” and “goliati” (hero) in ancient Georgian literature were often used as epithets for knights. The first is borrowed from the Persian and is therefore older, the second is taken from the Old Testament.

*katepan* (Gr. catepano) – an official of the Imperial court in Greece, governor of a large area.

*ch'artularius* – Keeper of archives, an official at the Byzantine imperial court.

*chq'ondideli* – the bishop of Chqondidi, often combined with the position of *mtsignobart'ukhutsesi* (prime minister).

*chukhcharkhi* – the king's bodyguard.

curopalate – a high-ranking official at the Byzantine Court.

*darbazi* – a palace or hall, often used by the supreme royal council of representatives from the Georgian aristocracy and church hierarchy.

*didebulis* – great, glorious, honoured, noble;those who made up the top layer of the “aznauris.”

*drahk'ani* – a gold coin.

*ejib* (Arab) – a “doorkeeper,” “master of ceremonies,” and also “king's representative”.

*encratits*- a sect in early Christianity, a variety of asceticism.

*ep'isk'op'osi* – bishop.

*eri* – people.

*erismtavari* – governor of a region.

*eristavi* – the head of eri, the army.

*eristavt eristavi* –chief eristavi, the eristavi of eristavis a post in the higher administration, the ruler of a region.

*ezos-modzgwari* – master of courtyard.

*ghado* – impenetrable, impassable.

*goliati* – giant, hero.

*gvari* – house, family.

K'akheti – a historical province in eastern Georgia.

*kalaki* – city.

*k'araseuli* – a vessel of the size of a fist.

*Kartli* – a historic region in eastern Georgia which gave the country its name. In the third century B.C., Mtskheta was the center of Kartli. In the Middle Ages, Kartli was traditionally divided along the Mt'k'vari, into three principal regions: Shida (Inner) Kartli or all of central Kartli north and south of the Mt'k'vari and west to its tributary, the Aragvi; Kvemo Kartli (Lower Kartli) – the lower basin of the Mt'k'vari and south of the river, and Zemo Kartli (Upper Kartli) – in the upper basin of the Mt'k'vari. Here Shida Kartli and Lower Kartli.

*kartvelebi* – the Georgians call themselves „ქართველები“ (*kartvelebi*) and their land „საქართველო“ (*sakartvelo*). According to tradition, the designation derives from Kartlos, one of the Georgian ethnarchs

*khalt'ulari* – (Gr. χαρτουλάριος), Roman and Byzantine officials, entrusted with administrative and economic duties.

*kharaj* – a tribute.

*khelmts'ipe* – a king, a monarch.

*koshki* – tower, bastion.

*koronik'on* (Greek) – the name of a calendar year according to a system, grounded on 532 years cycle (*moktseva*), in which 28 (the number of years of the Sun cycle) is multiplied by 19 (the number of years of the Moon cycle). The same correlation of week days, months and years is repeated every 532 years. The system had been used in the Georgian written sources mainly for designation of the 13<sup>th</sup> (that began in 781 y. according to the contemporary calendar) and 14<sup>th</sup> (begin. in 1313 y.) cycles.

*lashq'ari* – army.

*lit'ani* – in Christian worship and some forms of Judaic worship, is a form of prayer used in services and processions, and consisting of a number of petitions.

litre – Old Georgian measure of weight, approximately equal to 1 lb.

*magistros* – a title in the Byzantine court, the most senior official.

*mampali* (Geo. *mama* – father and *upali* – lord). It was a dynastic title in medieval Georgia (late eighth-tenth centuries), usually held by high-ranking Bagrationi princes.

*mandat'urt'ukhutsesi* – chief of mandators, the Byzantine “protomandator.”

*Mandat'uri* – an official at the Byzantine Royal Court.

*mandili* – mandylion, the kerchief imprinted with the portrait of Christ.

*marzap'an* – head of an Iranian province. Persian governors in the Caucasus were called *marzap'ans*.

*mech'urch'letukhutsesi* – a keeper, or manager of the treasury, its functions corresponded to the functions of a minister of finance.

*mejinibet'ukhutsesi* – chief of the grooms of the king's court.

*mepe* – king.

*mepoba* – kingship.

*mkhari* – side, shoulder, a unit of linear measure.

*mkhedari* – warrior.

*mk'vidri* – a native, inhabitant.

*mogvi* (Persian:  $\text{مغ}$  mogh) – the magi or wise men were a member of hereditary caste of priests, who came “from the East.”

*monap'ire* – the ruler of a frontier principality.

*msakhurt'ukhutsesi* – the chief of the officials at the court, the minister of the court.

*mtavari* (Geo “*tavi*” head) – leader, prince, noble.

*mtiuls* – Georgians living in the western part of Georgia, present-day Dusheti region.

*mts'ignobart'ukhutsesi* – chancellor, literally – the head of notaries, secretaries; taking into consideration his functions, he could be equated with a prime minister; in the manuscripts he is called “the first among the viziers.”

*nobilissimus* – A Byzantine title.

*p'ark'imanosi* – parakoimomenos was the Emperor's chamberlain, usually a eunuch, during the ninth-tenth centuries. Many of them were de-facto chief ministers of the Empire.

*p'it'iakhshi* (Mid. Pers. *bidaxš*) – Persian governor in the Caucsus. The dignity of *pitiakhsh* approximated to that of satrap.

*panjanobat* – music with drum beating and trumpet blowing, performed at the court of a Shah or a noble.

*parakoimomenos* – the night-nurse on duty, guard – an official at the Byzantine imperial court.

*parakoimomenos-p'roedros* – “One who sits in the first place, a president,” a Byzantine official.

*Patriarch* – a head of the church.

*p'roedrosi* (Gre.  $\text{πρόεδρος}$  “president”) – a senior [Byzantine court and ecclesiastic title](#) in the tenth to mid-twelfth centuries.

*q'oveli sakartvelo* – all Georgia, united Georgian kingdom.

*rekt'ori* – commander-in-chief

*saep'isk'op'oso* – cathedral, cathedral church.

*spani* – soldiers.

*sp'asalar* (Pers.) – commander of a military detachment.

*sark'inozi* (Gre. Sarakenoi) – Saracen; in the first three centuries A.D., the term was applied to an Arab tribe living in the Sinai Peninsula. And, after the establishment of the caliphate, the Byzantines referred to all Muslims of the Caliph as Saracens.

*sigeli* – charter.

*sp'aspet'* (Pers. “sepah” army and “pat” head – commander-in chief, military leader.

*Svans* – Georgians, sub-ethnic group of Georgians living in the northern mountainous area of Georgia.

*t'adzreuli* – one of the social terms for the highest order in Georgia in the early Middle Ages.

*t'aghma* – troops.

*tavadi* – prince; the main and most important part of the nobility.

*t'belni* – the people of T'beti.

*tsikhistavi* (“tsikhe” – fortress and “tavi” – head) – a fortress-commander, a head of a small town.

*ut'evan* – a measure of length in medieval Georgia, about 198 metres.

*vaziri* – the vizir.

# Some Turco-Mongolica at Internet Archive

Prepared by Robert G. Bedrosian

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[The Seljuqs](#), by Herbert M. J. Loewe. This study appeared as Chapter 10b in Volume 4 of the *Cambridge Medieval History* (Cambridge, 1923) and covers the 9th-13th centuries. Topics include: Importance of the Seljuqs; Decay of the Caliphate; The Shi'ites; Islam saved by the Seljuqs; The dynasty of Seljuq; Tughril Beg; The Vezier Nizam al-Mulk; Alp Arslan; Malik Shah; Intrigues of Turkan Khatun; Barkiyaruq: civil wars; Muhammad; Sanjar, the last Great Seljuq; Revolts of Atsiz of Khwarazm; The Ghuzz: death of Sanjar; The Atabegs and local Seljuq dynasties; The Seljuqs of Rum; Coming of the Crusaders; End of the Seljuq power. Includes Title Page, Table of Contents, Chapter 10b (pp. 299-317), Bibliography for Chapter 10b (p. 836), Abbreviations, and Chronological Table, in 34 pdf pages.

[The Political and Dynastic History of the Iranian World \(A.D. 1000-1217\)](#), by C. E. Bosworth, from *Cambridge History of Iran*, Volume 5 (Cambridge, 1968), The Saljuq and Mongol Periods, chapter 1, pp. 1-202 and chapter bibliography, in 211 pdf pages.

[A Rare Thirteenth Century History of the Seljuqs](#), in 85 pdf pages. This article appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1902) pp. 567-610 and 849-887. It is a translation and sometimes summary of the text of a rare or unique Persian manuscript which presents a history of the Seljuqs from the beginning of the dynasty down to the author's own time, around 1197. It was written in the year 1202-3. The manuscript itself is also 13th century, dated A.H. 635 (A.D. 1238). Based on oral traditions and state archives, it includes invaluable historical and anecdotal information about the Seljuq dynasty, and concludes with a variety of unusual entries on topics such as the different forms of chess, the ethics of wine-drinking, various sports notably riding and

archery, the principles of writing, calligraphy, the keeping of state accounts, etc. The author was a strong Sunni. Translation and commentary by the renowned Iranist E. G. Browne.

[The Circulation of Silver in the Moslem East Down to The Mongol Epoch](#), by Robert P. Blake, from *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 3/4 (Dec., 1937), pp. 291-328, in 39 pdf pages.

[The Mongols](#), by Herbert M. J. Loewe, in 43 pdf pages. This study appeared as Chapter 20 in Volume 4 of the *Cambridge Medieval History* (Cambridge, 1923) and covers the 12th-15th centuries. Topics include: Character of Mongol history; Extent of the Mongol invasions; Unification of Asia; Mongol and Tartar; Other tribes in the Mongol Confederation; Jenghiz Khan; Conquest of Turkestan and Khwarazm; Empire of Jenghiz Khan; Conquest of Northern China; Advance westward; Invasion of Europe; The recall of Batu saves Europe; The Papacy and the Mongols; Ogdaï and Kuyuk; Downfall of the Assassins; The fall of the Caliphate of Baghdad; Defeat of the Mongols by the Mamluks, 1260; Hülegü and the Il-khans; Mangū; The reign of Kublai; Change in the Mongols; Fall of the Mongols in China; The western Mongols: Timur; Conquest of India: defeat of the Ottoman; The Golden Horde. Includes Title Page, Table of Contents, Chapter 20 (pp. 627-652), Bibliography for Chapter 20 (pp. 880-882), Abbreviations, and Chronological Table.

[Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khans](#), by John Andrew Boyle, from *Cambridge History of Iran*, Volume 5 (Cambridge, 1968), The Saljuq and Mongol Periods, chapter 4, pp. 303-421, and the chapter's bibliography, in 123 pdf pages.

[The Isma'ili State](#), by M.G.S. Hodgson, from *Cambridge History of Iran*, Volume 5 (Cambridge, 1968), The Saljuq and Mongol Periods, chapter 5, pp. 422-482, in 63 pdf pages.

See also: [Isma'ilism](#), multiple authors and entries, at *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.

[The Ottoman Turks to the Fall of Constantinople \[1453\]](#), by Edwin Pears, in 75 pdf pages. This study appeared as Chapter 21 in Volume 4 of the *Cambridge Medieval History* (Cambridge, 1923) and covers the 13th-15th centuries. Topics include: Infiltration of Turkish nomads into Asia Minor; Ertughril; Accession of Osman; The Catalan Grand Company; First entry of Turks into Europe, 1308; Progress of Osman; Capture of Brusa; Capture of Nicaea; Capture of Nicomedia; Orkhan styled Sultan; The Janissaries; Organisation of the army; Orkhan in alliance with Cantacuzene; Venetian versus Genoese influence; The Ottomans in Europe; Murad I; European policy of the Ottomans; Defeat of the Serbs on the Maritza, 1371; Subservience of the Empire to Murad; Battle of Kosovo, 1389; Causes of Murad's success; Bayazid the Thunderbolt; Western crusade against the Turks; Victory of Bayazid at Nicopolis, 1396; Boucicaud at Constantinople; The appearance of Timur; His capture of Aleppo and Baghdad; Battle of Angora, 1402; Timur's conquests in Asia Minor; Death of Timur and Bayazid; Civil war among the Ottomans; Mahomet I; Character of his reign; Murad II; Increasing numbers of the Ottomans; European conquests of Murad; Crusade of Vladislav and Hunyadi; Murad's victories at Varna and Kosovo; Accession of Mahomet II; Preparations for the siege of Constantinople; Western assistance for the Emperor; The besieging force; The defences of Constantinople; The dispositions of the besieged; Defeat of Mahomet's Fleet; The Turkish fleet in the Golden Horn; Preparations for a general assault; Commencement of the assault, 29 May 1453; The Janissaries force the stockade; Capture of Constantinople; Character of Mahomet II. Includes Title Page, Table of Contents, Chapter 21 (pp. 653-705), Bibliography for Chapter 21 (pp. 883-889), Abbreviations, and Chronological Table.

[The Destruction of the Greek Empire and the Story of the Capture of Constantinople by the Turks](#), by Edwin Pears (London, 1903), in 513 pdf pages.

[The Rise of the Ottoman Turks and Its Historical Background](#), by William L. Langer and Robert P. Blake, from the *American Historical Review*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Apr., 1932), pp. 468-505, in 39 pdf pages.

[Fragments de géographes et d'historiens Arabes et Persans inédit, relatifs aux anciens peuples du Caucase et de la Russie méridionale](#), in 270 pdf pages. This study by the noted philologist Charles-Francois Defremery (1822-1888) was serialized in *Journal Asiatique*, 4th series (Paris, 1849-1851), in volumes 13, 14, 16, and 17. It includes French translations of Arabic and Persian historical works and geographies describing the peoples, tribes, and states of the Caucasus and south Russia. Contents include extracts from: Abu al-Bekri on the Pechenegs, Khazars, Borthas, Bulgars of the Volga and the Danube; from Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun describing conflicts involving the Armenians, Georgians, and other peoples of the Caucasus during the Turco-Mongol invasions of the Saljuqs, Khwarazmians, Mongols, Qipchaqs and others (11-13th centuries); extracts from the travels of Ibn Battuta; from Khondemir and Mirkhond about the Qipchaqs and Shirvanshahs. Includes invaluable scholarly notes by this careful historian.

[A Farewell to the Khagan of the Aq-Aqatāran](#), by W. B. Henning. From *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3, *Studies Presented to Vladimir Minorsky by His Colleagues and Friends* (1952), pp. 501-522. A discussion of the word *khagan* and sources on early Khazar history.

[Les Mongols d'après les historiens arméniens; fragments traduits sur les textes originaux](#), in 192 pdf pages. This study appeared in *Journal Asiatique* 11(1858) pp. 192-255, 426-473, 481-508 and *JA* 16(1860) pp. 273-322. The author, the noted historian, Egyptologist, and Armenist, Édouard Dulaurier (1808-1881), translated extensive extracts from two invaluable Armenian historical sources of the 13th century pertaining to the Mongols: Kirakos Ganjakets'i and Vardan Arewelts'i ("the Easterner").

[Aperçu des entreprises des Mongols en Géorgie et en Arménie, dans le XIIIe siècle](#), by Julius Klaproth, from *Journal Asiatique* 12(1833), pp. 193-214, 273-305, in 60 pdf pages.

[Étude sur Thomas de Medzoph](#) et sur son *Histoire de l'Arménie au XVe siècle, d'après deux manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale*, by Felix Neve, in 62 pdf pages. This study appeared in *Journal Asiatique* V 6(1855) pp. 221-281. It is a description of the *History of Tamerlane and His Successors* by T'ovma of Metsop' (1378-1446), an Armenian cleric and historian.

[Exposé des guerres de Tamerlan](#) et de *Schah-Rokh dans l'Asie occidentale, d'après le chronique arménienne inédite de Thomas de Medzoph* (Brussels, 1861), by Felix Neve, in 164 pdf pages. Study, partial translation, and scholarly notes.

**Histoire des Mongols, depuis Tchinguiz-Khan jusqu'à Timour Bey ou Tamerlan** (Paris, 1834-1835, reprinted numerous times), by Constantin Mouradzea D'Ohsson. This work, still one of the most substantial studies of the Mongols, has been translated into Mongolian and Chinese among other languages. In four volumes:

[volume 1](#), in 524 pdf pages.  
[volume 2](#), in 665 pdf pages.  
[volume 3](#), in 633 pdf pages.  
[volume 4](#), in 785 pdf pages.

Also available by D'Ohsson:

[Des peuples du Caucase et des pays au nord de la mer Noire et de la mer Caspienne, dans le dixième siècle, ou Voyage d'Abou-el-Cassim](#) (Paris, 1828), in 330 pdf pages.

*Histoire du commerce du Levant au moyen-âge*, by W. Heyd, in two volumes: [volume 1](#) (Leipzig, 1885), in 594 pdf pages. [volume 2](#) (Leipzig, 1886), in 820 pdf pages.

[Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion](#), by W. Barthold (Oxford, 1928, 2nd edition). This is an English translation of V. V. Barthold's two-volume Russian work *Turkestan v epokhu mongol'skago nashestvija* (St. Petersburg, 1898-1900), in 534 searchable pdf pages. Contents: Sources: 1. Pre-Mongol Period; 2. Mongol Invasion; 3. European Works of Reference; Chapter 1. Geographical Survey of Transoxania; Chapter 2. Central Asia Down to the Twelfth Century; Chapter 3. Qara-Khitays and Khwarazm-Shahs; Chapter 4. Chingiz-Khan and the Mongols; Chronological Summary; Bibliography.

**History of the Mongols**, *from the 9th to the 19th Century*, by Henry W. Howorth (London, 1876), in three volumes: [volume 1](#), *The Mongols Proper and the Kalmuks*; [volume 2](#), *The So-Called Tartars of Russia*; [volume 3](#) *The Mongols of Persia*.

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Entries from *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (**partial list only**):

[Central Asia](#), multiple topics and authors.  
[Altaic](#), by K. H. Menges.  
[Huns](#), by Martin Schottky.  
[Gozz/Oğur/Oğuz](#), by Peter B. Golden and C. Edmund Bosworth.

[Alp-Arslan](#), by K. A. Luther.  
[Malekshah](#), by David Durand-Guédy.  
[Saljuq Literature](#), by Daniela Meneghini.  
[Saljuq Art and Architecture](#), by Lorenz Korn.

[Saljuqs of Rum](#), by Andrew Peacock.  
[Danishmend](#), by Tahsin Yazici.

[Khwarazmshahs](#), by C. Edmund Bosworth.  
[Jalal al-Din Mengubirdi](#), by C. Edmund Bosworth.

[Mongols](#), by Peter Jackson.

[Chingiz-Khan](#) (1206-1227), by David O. Morgan.

[Baiju](#), fl. 1228-1259, by Peter Jackson.

[Čormaġun](#), d. ca. 1242, by Peter Jackson.

[Güyük-Khan](#), 1246-1248, by Peter Jackson.

[The Ilkhans](#), multiple authors.

[Hulāgu \(Hülegü\)](#) (1256-1265), founder of the Il-Khanid dynasty, by Reuven Amitai.

[Dokuz Kātūn](#), d. 1265, by Charles Melville.

[Abaga](#) second Il-Khan of Iran, 1265-1281, by Peter Jackson.

[Aḥmad-Takudār](#), third Il-Khan of Iran, 1282-1284, by Peter Jackson.

[Arġūn Khan](#), fourth Il-Khan of Iran, 1284-1291, by Peter Jackson.

[Gaykātū Khan](#), fifth Il-Khan of Iran, 1291-1295, by Peter Jackson.

[Bāydū](#), sixth Il-Khan of Iran, 1295, by B. Spuler.

[Gāzān Khan](#), seventh Il-Khan of Iran, 1295-1304, by R. Amitai-Preiss.

Oljeitu, eighth Il-Khan of Iran, 1304-1316, no online entry.

[Abū Saʿīd](#), ninth Il-Khan of Iran, 1316-1335, by Peter Jackson.

[Golden Horde](#), by Peter Jackson.

[Chobanids](#), 1335-1357, by Charles Melville and ʿAbbās Zaryāb.

[Elchi](#), envoy, messenger, by David O. Morgan.

[Alamūt](#), by B. Hourcade.

[Saljuq](#), [Mongol](#), [Ottoman Libraries](#) are described in the first part of an article entitled *Persian Manuscripts in Ottoman and Modern Turkish Libraries*, by Osman G. Özgüdenli.

[Book Illustration under the Il-Khanids](#), by Stefano Carboni.

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[Armenia during the Seljuk and Mongol Periods](#), by Robert Bedrosian. This article was published as Chapter 10 in *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Vol.1, Richard G. Hovannisian, ed. (New York, 1997) pp. 241-271.

[The Turco-Mongol Invasions and the Lords of Armenia in the 13th-14th Centuries](#), Robert Bedrosian's Ph.D. dissertation (Columbia University, 1979), in 320 searchable and bookmarked pdf pages.

[The Trade and Cities of Armenia After the Fall of the Bagratid Kingdom](#), by H. A. Manandian, Chapter 6 from Manandian's *The Trade and Cities of Armenia in Relation to Ancient World Trade* (Lisbon, 1965), English translation of the 1946 original by Nina G. Garsoian.

Also available by Manandyan:

[Սելջուկյան շրջանից մինչև Սեֆյանների հաստատումը Իրանում \(XI-XV դդ.\) Seljukyan shrjanits' minch'ev Sefyanneri hastatume" Iranum \(XI-XV dd.\)](#) [From the Seljuk Period until the Establishment of the Safavids in Iran (11-15th Centuries)] (Erevan, 1977), in 520 pdf pages. Most of this work was published originally in 1944, as part of Manandyan's *K'nnakan tesut'yun hay zhoghovrdi patmut'yan* [Critical Survey of the History of the Armenian People]. The scan was made from Manandyan's *Erker G* [Works III] (Erevan, 1977), pp. 9-504.

[Mxit'ar \(Mekhithar\) of Ani on the Rise of the Seljuqs](#), by Dickran K. Kouymjian, in 23 pdf pages. This invaluable study by the great Kouymjian appeared in the journal *Revue des études arméniennes*, 6 (1969) pp. 331-353.

[Byzance et les turcs seldjoucides dans l'Asie occidentale jusqu'en 1081](#), by Joseph Laurent (Paris, 1913), in 136 pdf pages.

[The Crusades: An Eastern Perspective with Emphasis on Syriac Sources](#), by Matti Moosa, from *The Muslim World* Vol. 93 (April, 2003), pp. 249-289.

See also: [Writings of Matti Moosa](#).

[The Kingdom of Cilician Armenia](#), by Sirarpie Der Nersessian, from *A History of the Crusades* (Philadelphia, 1962), K. M. Setton, Editor-in-Chief, vol. II. Chapter XVIII. I, pp. 630-659, in 30 searchable pdf pages. Written by the great 20th-century Armenist and art historian, Dr. Sirarpie Der Nersessian, this is a concise, scholarly survey of the Cilician Armenian kingdom's political, military, and cultural history to the early 14th century.

See also: [Writings of Sirarpie Der Nersessian](#).

[Կիլիկիայի հայկական պետությունը Kilikiayi haykakan petut'yune"](#) [The Armenian State of Cilicia], chapters 40-46 from volume 3 of *Hay zhoghovrdi patmut'yun* [History of the Armenian People] (Erevan, 1976), in 139 pdf pages, by M. K. Zulalyan, S. V. Bornazyan, and Kh. A. Musheghyan.

[Հայ մշակույթը XII-XIV դարերում Hay mshakuyt'e" XII-XIV darerum](#) [Armenian Culture in the 12th-14th Centuries], chapters 47-54 from volume 3 of *Hay zhoghovrdi patmut'yun* [History of the Armenian People] (Erevan, 1976), in 326 pdf pages. Multiple authors.

[The Mongolian Names and Terms in the History of the Nation of the Archers by Grigor of Akanc'](#), written by Francis Woodman Cleaves, from *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* vol. 12, #3-4 (1949) pp. 400-443. This important article contains a thorough discussion with extensive bibliography of the Mongolian names and terms in a 13th-century Cilician Armenian historical source.

[A Chancellery Practice of the Mongols in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries](#), by Francis Woodman Cleaves, from *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3/4 (Dec., 1951), pp. 493-526, in 37 pdf pages.

[The Historicity of The Baljuna Covenant](#), by Francis Woodman Cleaves, from *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3/4 (Dec., 1955), pp. 357-421, in 66 pdf pages.

[On the Titles Given in Juvaini to Certain Mongolian Princes](#), by John Andrew Boyle, from *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 1/2 (Jun., 1956), pp. 146-154, in 10 pdf pages.

See also: [Writings of John Andrew Boyle](#).

[La lettre du Connétable Smbat et les rapports entre Chrétiens et Mongols au milieu de XIIIème siècle](#), by Jean Richard, from *Armenian Studies in Memoriam Haig Berberian* (Lisbon, 1986), Dickran Kouymjian, editor, pp. 683-696, in 15 pdf pages.

[The Letter of Smbat Constable to King Henry I of Cyprus \(around A.D. 1248\)](#)), in 2 pdf pages. This is an English translation with the original Old French text, from Henry Yule's *Cathay and the Way Thither*, 2nd ed rev H. Cordier, *Hakluyt Society Second Series* No. 38 (London, 1915) vol. I, p.162 note 1. Smbat *Sparapet* ("the Constable", 1206-1276) was Cilician Armenia's noted general, statesman, and historian. He visited the Mongol court in Qaraqorum (1248) and recorded some of his observations in this short letter in French to his brother-in-law Henry I of Cyprus.

[Documents Relating to the Mission of the Minor Friars to China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries](#), by A. C. Moule, from *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (Jul., 1914), pp. 533-599, in 69 pdf pages.

[Georgia in the Reign of Giorgi the Brilliant \(1314-1346\)](#), by D. M. Lang, from *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1955), pp. 74-91, in 19 pdf pages.

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English translations of some Armenian historical sources important for the study of Khazar, Saljuq, and Mongol history are available on other pages of this site. Among them are:

## 7-8th Century

[History of the Aghuans](#), attributed to Movse's Dasxurants'i

## 11th Century

[Aristakes Lastivertc'i's History](#)

## 12th Century

[The Chronicle of Michael the Great, Patriarch of the Syrians](#). This is an English translation of two 13th-century Armenian abridgements.

Especially intriguing is Michael's account of early history, not known from other sources: [The Early History of the Turks](#).

[The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa](#)

## 12-13th Century

[Mkhitar Gosh's Colophon or The Aghuanian Chronicle](#)

## 13th Century

[Kirakos Gandzakets'i's History of the Armenians](#)

[Vardan Arewelts'i's Compilation of History](#)

[Extracts on the Saljuqs, Shaddadids, Zakarids, and Mongols]

[Step'annos Orbelean's History of the State of Sisakan](#)

[Smbat Sparapet's Chronicle](#)

[Chronicle](#) Attributed to King Het'um II, 1296

[Grigor Aknerts'i's History of the Nation of Archers](#) [Mongols]

## 14th Century

[Het'um the Historian's History of the Tartars](#) [The Flower of Histories of the East]

## 15th Century

[T'ovma Metsobets'i's History of Tamerlane and His Successors](#)

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English translations of some Syriac sources for the 7th through 13th centuries at Internet Archive:

Extracts from the **Chronicle** of Michael Rabo [Michael the Syrian]:

[The 7th through Mid-9th Centuries](#)

[The 10th-12th Centuries](#)

[The Late 12th Century](#)

[Bar Hebraeus' Chronography](#), translated from Syriac by E. A. Wallis Budge (London, 1932). Bar Hebraeus (also Gregory Abu'l Faraj) was a prominent Syrian Orthodox cleric of the 13th century and author of works on numerous subjects. His *Chronography*, based on sources extant and lost, is an invaluable primary source for Turkish and Mongol history. It extends to the author's death in 1286 and was continued an additional ten years by his brother.

[The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the world, 1253-55](#), as narrated by himself, with two accounts of the earlier journey of John of Pian de Carpine, translated from the Latin by William Woodville Rockhill (London, 1900), in 390 pdf pages. *Hakluyt Society*, second

series No. IV. William of Rubruck, a French Franciscan friar who travelled to the Mongol court in Qaraqorum, and also to Armenia and Asia Minor in the mid-13th century, provides invaluable information about the Mongols, and the Armenians of the Far East and Caucasia.

[The First and Second Crusades from an Anonymous Syriac Chronicle](#), by A. S. Tritton and H. A. R. Gibb, from *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, No. 1 (Jan., 1933), pp. 69-101, and No. 2 (Apr., 1933), pp. 273-305, in 68 pdf pages. The source is the Anonymous Edessan (13th century).

Also available by Tritton:

[The Tribes of Syria in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries](#), from *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3/4 (1948), pp. 567-573, in 8 pdf pages.

A volume from the important series *Օտար աղբյուրները Հայաստանի և հայերի մասին* *O'tar aghbyurnere" Hayastani ev hayeri masin* [*Foreign Sources on Armenia and the Armenians*] contains a modern Armenian translation of the Anonymous Edessan, a 13th-century Syriac source describing the Saljuq domination, the Crusades, the Armenian principalities of Northern Syria, and other topics.

[Ասորական աղբյուրներ Asorakan aghbyurner \[Syriac Sources\] II. Անանուն Եդեսացի ժամանակագրություն Ananun Edesats'i zhamanakagrut'yun \[Chronicle of the Anonymous Edessan\]](#) (Erevan, 1982), in 269 pdf pages. Translation, study, and scholarly notes by L. H. Ter-Petrosyan.

Also available from the same series are three volumes in the subseries *Թուրքական աղբյուրները Հայաստանի, հայերի, և անդրկովկասի մյուս ժողովրդների մասին* *T'urk'akan aghbyurnere" Hayastani, hayeri, ev andrkovkasi myus zhoghovrdneri masin* [*Turkish Sources on Armenia, the Armenians, and Other Peoples of Transcaucasia*], dealing with later centuries. These are modern Armenian translations of Ottoman Turkish historians of the 16-18th centuries, accompanied by scholarly introductions, notes, and lexicons. All three volumes are the work of the great Turkologist A. X. Safrastyan. Available at Internet Archive for reading online and/or downloading in various formats:

1. [Թուրքական աղբյուրները Հ. 1](#) (Erevan, 1961), in 402 pdf pages. Contents include the chroniclers Pechevi, Naima, Rashid, Chelebi-Zade, Suphi, Sami, Shakir, Sulayman-Izdi, Vassef, Ahmed Chevdet-Pasha.
2. [Թուրքական աղբյուրները Հ. 2](#) (Erevan, 1964), in 335 pdf pages. Contents include the chroniclers Gharib Chelebi, Seloniki Mustafa, Solak Zade, Shani Zade, Munejjim Bashi, Feridun Bey, Kochi Bey.
3. [Թուրքական աղբյուրները Հ. 3](#) (Erevan, 1967), in 347 pdf pages. Extracts from the writings of Evliya Chelebi (1611-1682), Ottoman Turkish officer and diplomat.

[Հայաստան իբն Բիբիի համեմատ Hayastan Ibn Bibii hamemat \[Armenia according to Ibn](#)

[Bibi](#)], from the journal *Hande's Amso'reay* 74(1960) cols. 161-177, 481-492, in 16 pdf pages. This is a modern Armenian translation of relevant parts of Ibn Bibi's *History of the Saljuqs*, a 13th-century Persian-language source which covers the period between 1192 and 1280. Translated into Armenian by P. Ter-Poghosian from *Die Seltschukengeschichte des Ibn Bibi* (Copenhagen 1959) H. Duda's critical edition.

[Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts, 1301-1480](#), A Source for Middle Eastern History, by Avedis K. Sanjian (Cambridge, MA., 1969), in 470 searchable pdf pages. Colophons are additions to the ends of manuscripts, made by their copyist(s). Some contain invaluable information on local and regional events. Sanjian's translations are selections from the magisterial publications of Levon Khachikyan, and are accompanied by extensive glossaries.

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## Journals

The Armenological journal *Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես* *Patma-banasirakan handes* [Historico-Philological Journal] (Erevan, Armenia) is now Open Access: [Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես](#).

The journal *Լրաբեր հասարակական գիտությունների* *Lraber hasarakakan gitut'yunneri* [Bulletin of Social Sciences] (Erevan, Armenia) is now Open Access: [Լրաբեր հասարակական գիտությունների](#).

Articles from the serial *Banber Matenadaran* [Journal of the Matenadaran], may be downloaded from this page of the Matenadaran's website: [Բանբեր Մատենադարանի](#).

Available for reading online and/or downloading from Internet Archive is volume III in the series *Հայ ժողովրդի պատմություն* *Hay zhoghovrdi patmut'yun* [History of the Armenian People] (Erevan, 1976), B. N. Arakelyan, editor, a publication of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR. It is an extensive study of the period from the mid 9th through the mid 14th centuries written by renowned Armenists. Available here: [Հայ ժողովրդի Պատմություն, Հ. 3](#) (Erevan, 1976), in 1036 searchable pdf pages.

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[El-Mas'udi's Historical Encyclopaedia](#), entitled *Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems*, volume 1, translated from Arabic by Aloys Sprenger (London, 1841), in 548 pdf pages. Al-Masudi (896-956) was a renowned traveller, geographer, and historian.

*The History of the World-Conquerer* by 'Ala ad-Din 'Ata-Malik Juvaini (c. 1226-1283), translated from the Persian text of Mirza Muhammad Qazvini by John Andrew Boyle, in two volumes (Cambridge, Mass., 1958): [volume 1](#), in 409 searchable pdf pages. [volume 2](#), in 422 searchable pdf pages.

[Histoire du sultan Djelal ed-Din Mankobirti, prince du Kharazem](#), by Muhammad ibn Ahmad Nasawi, translated by O. Victor Houdas (Paris, 1895), in 518 searchable pdf pages.

[The Texts and Versions of John de Plano Carpini and William de Rubruquis](#), together with some shorter pieces translated by C. Raymond Beazley (London, 1903), in 376 pdf pages. *Hakluyt Society*.

[Mission to Asia](#), Christopher Dawson, editor (New York, 1966), in 281 searchable pdf pages. Narratives and letters of the Franciscan missionaries in Mongolia and China in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Originally published in 1955 under the title *The Mongol Mission*.

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[volume 1](#) (London, 1909, repr. of 1902 edition), *From the Earliest Times until Firdawsi*, in 548 pdf pages.

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Excellent Wikipedia entry: [List of Muslim Historians](#)

Important reference materials: [Islamic Manuscripts Reference Library](#).

Alphabetical List of Open Access Historical Newspapers and Other Periodicals in Middle East and Islamic Studies:

[Access to Mideast and Islamic Resources \(AMIR\)](#).

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# Folklore and Mythology

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